

Exhibit 15

Fairfax County School Board Meeting

Held via Zoom

September 15, 2020

1 Attendees:
2 Laura Jane Cohen
3 Abrar Omeish
4 Elaine Tholen
5 Karen Corbett Sanders
6 Karen Keys-Gamarra
7 Karl Frisch
8 Megan McLaughlin
9 Melanie K. Meren
10 Rachna Sizemore Heizer
11 Dr. Ricardy Anderson
12 Stella Pekarsky
13 Tamara Derenak Kaufax
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1 MS. COHEN: Okay. Folks. It is four
2 o'clock, so were going to need to get
3 started. I will say that I cannot promise
4 that my dogs are going cooperate as well
5 as Mr. Firsch's did, or my children. So I
6 will do my best to keep it as quiet as
7 humanly possible in my house.

8 We are going to start with a quick
9 check back in again. So I'll do a role
10 call just to make sure that everybody was
11 able to get back.

12 Ms. Omeish?

13 MS. OMEISH: Here.

14 MS. COHEN: Ms. Tholen?

15 MS. THOLEN: I'm here, thank you.

16 MS. COHEN: Ms. Corbet Sanders?

17 MS. CORBET SANDERS: I'm here.

18 MS. COHEN: Ms. Keys-Gamarra?

19 MS. KEYS-GAMARRA: Here.

20 MS. COHEN: Mr. Frisch?

21 MR. FRISCH: Present.

22 MS. COHEN: Ms. McLaughlin?

23 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Here.

24 MS. COHEN: Ms. Meren?

25 MS. MEREN: Here.

1 MS. COHEN: Ms. Sizemore Heizer?

2 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: I'm kind of
3 here.

4 MS. COHEN: Dr. Anderson?

5 DR. ANDERSON: I'm present, thank you.

6 MS. COHEN: Ms. Pekarsky?

7 MS. PEKARSKY: I'm here.

8 MS. COHEN: Ms. Derenak Kaufax?

9 MS. DERENAK KAUFAX: Here.

10 MS. COHEN: All right. It looks like
11 everyone who has signed on.

12 I would love us to go ahead and get
13 started, so Dr. Brabrand, I will turn it
14 over to you.

15 DR. BRABRAND: Thank you, Ms. Cohen.
16 And thank you members of the Fairfax
17 County School Board. I am glad to present
18 to you this evening, TJ Admissions Merit
19 Lottery proposal.

20 I want to start, if I can that
21 presentation to come up on the screen for
22 everybody. Again, I'd like to start with
23 the next slide in the agenda, what we're
24 going to do this afternoon. We're going
25 to share some background about TJ and TJ

1 Admissions, look at the current
2 application process, previous changes that
3 this board and other boards have made over
4 the years around TJ Admissions, and look
5 at the results of that work.

6 Based on that, I'm also going to share
7 with you, after review by our team, a
8 merit lottery proposal and give you an
9 overview of that proposal and model for
10 you what that proposal would look like and
11 what have looked like in past times in
12 Fairfax County Schools for TJ.

13 I'd like to go to the next slide. One
14 of the things we just talked about earlier
15 this afternoon is leading with equity at
16 the center of all that we say and do. And
17 that is such an important discussion that
18 this board and the prior school board has
19 had, as we've talked about One Fairfax and
20 having equity at the focus and center of
21 what we do. And we need to recognize,
22 today, that TJ should reflect the
23 diversity of Fairfax County Public
24 Schools, the community, and of Northern
25 Virginia, as other school divisions also

1 have students that attend Thomas
2 Jefferson.

3 And the reality, today, if we are
4 honestly leading with equity at the
5 center, is that the talent at Thomas
6 Jefferson, currently, does not reflect the
7 talent that exists in FCPS. We recognize
8 a comprehensive approach is needed to
9 enhance diversity and inclusion at Thomas
10 Jefferson.

11 This goal aligns with the One Fairfax
12 initiative, and we are proposing a
13 three-prong approach. Today, you'll be
14 hearing about admissions and the merit
15 lottery recommendation. The second piece
16 is really about enhancing the pipeline,
17 and this board and the prior board already
18 were looking at this issue. We heard from
19 our AAP study consultants back in the
20 spring, and we will be bringing you, next
21 month, our recommendations from those
22 consultants around how we can enhance the
23 pipeline to TJ and really to enhance the
24 pipeline for advanced academics across all
25 of our schools.

1 We will also talk about a third prong,
2 which is enhanced wraparound support for
3 our Thomas Jefferson students.

4 I'd like to just center the board, and
5 then next slide, if we can, on what FCPS
6 student population looks like if we go
7 back to fall of 2019. You can see a
8 little bit over 37 percent Asian, a little
9 bit over 19 -- excuse me -- 37 percent
10 white, my apologies, a little bit over 19
11 percent Asian, almost 10 percent
12 African-American, and you can see, again,
13 two or more races and our Hispanic
14 population being almost 27 percent.

15 You can see below the pie chart that
16 our economically disadvantage population,
17 as of last year, and we know that number
18 has been trending slightly upward, is
19 slightly over 29 percent. And English
20 language learners stands at 24 -- or 27.4
21 percent of our population. We have a
22 large number of English language learners
23 as part of the overall Commonwealth of
24 Virginia, second language learners.

25 I'm now going to turn it over to our

1 Chief Operator Officer Marty Smith, to
2 give you some historical perspective on TJ
3 Admissions. Mr. Smith.

4 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Dr. Brabrand.
5 And if we could just stay on this slide
6 for a moment. This slide here will frame
7 our discussion for the remainder of the
8 day. We'll be looking at -- at our
9 diversity at TJ, and as Dr. Brabrand said
10 earlier, the diversity at TJ doesn't
11 currently reflect the diversity of
12 Northern Virginia and the talent at
13 TJ -- TJ does not reflect the talent in
14 Fairfax County Public Schools.

15 If we go to the next slide. I want to
16 share some data here with you. And on the
17 left, you'll see a 15-year look back of
18 our application pool. And on the right,
19 you'll see a 15-year look back of the same
20 student offers for TJ High School, for
21 science and technology. It's important to
22 note that some of the gaps that we've seen
23 over time for some of our groups of
24 students have only gotten wider with the
25 regard to the applicant pool, and we see

1 that those gaps have gotten wider for
2 those students are offered admissions to
3 the school.

4 Again, the framing of our discussion
5 today is to talk about the steps that
6 we've taken along the way to address these
7 gaps. And for the rest of our
8 presentation, we'll be taking snapshots
9 from crucial years in this process, so
10 that you can see the changes that we've
11 put in place.

12 Before I do go on, I do want to thank,
13 both, Ms. Cohen and Mr. Frisch for
14 their -- input as part of the manger's
15 meeting so that we can help frame
16 this -- this story in a different way.

17 So if we go to the next slide. Before
18 I have Mr. Shughart, who is our director
19 for TJ Admissions speak, I do want to
20 point out, as Dr. Brabrand said, that, you
21 know, past boards have been focused on
22 diversity at TJ for -- for quite some
23 time. The community has been concerned
24 about diversity at TJ for quite some time.
25 And so I want Mr. Shughart to take this

1 opportunity to go through this slide to
2 talk about the changes that we've made to
3 the process, but it is important to note
4 that with all of these changes that we've
5 made to the process, we haven't realized
6 the outcomes that we were looking for,
7 which is why we're bringing this proposal
8 to you today.

9 So with that, Mr. Shughart, would you
10 please describe the changes for the Class
11 of 2016 through the Class of 2022?

12 MR. SHUGHART: Thank you, Mr. Smith,
13 and good evening board. Just to kind of
14 start and work your way down so that way
15 you can -- you know, as you're reading
16 through this. Back in 2011 -- the
17 2011-2012 school year, which would have
18 resulted in the class of 2016, at that
19 point in time, a position was created and
20 added to the TJ Admissions office, and
21 that position was the Outreach Specialist.

22 At that point in time, it was a new
23 position, and we were building that
24 position up to basically encourage and
25 bring about more diversity from that.

1 Reaching out to the community, and
2 specifically to our underrepresented
3 students.

4 As we moved forward, in 2013-14, one
5 of the things that had occurred at that
6 point in time was the previous board -- or
7 the board at the time had some -- made
8 some changes to the policy. And it
9 holistically was -- was the way in which
10 we went. So we moved away from a
11 component-based scoring of the applicants
12 to a holistic review.

13 At the same time, we also moved the
14 student information sheet from a part of
15 the application to a proctored
16 environment. And so what we're seeing is,
17 is we're seeing a periodic or -- of a
18 large shift with the holistic review and
19 then minor changes to the process.

20 The following year, we made changes
21 to -- at that time what was known as the
22 sliding scale. The sliding scale was a
23 combination of test scores, along with
24 GPA. And ultimately, it was to increase
25 to pool of students who were in our

1 semi-finalist pool. In 2015, with the
2 class of 2020, we altered our
3 problem-solving essay.

4 Prior to that, it was more of
5 a -- more of an -- an essay or combination
6 of essays that students would write that
7 were more along the persuasive writing
8 style. And we identified that really what
9 we were looking for was students'
10 abilities to solve problems and how they
11 went about that.

12 So we implemented the problem solving
13 essay. Unfortunately, in the year of
14 2016-17, due to budget cuts, we were
15 forced to reduced our outreach specialist
16 position to 0.5 position. That
17 dramatically changed and altered how we
18 did some of our work at that point in
19 time, still to this day.

20 In 2017, and just prior to that, we
21 were informed by our test producer at the
22 time and that they were no longer going to
23 be producing the TJ Admissions tests. So
24 in 2017 we worked with a large group
25 of -- of interested, you know, people that

1 had a commitment to TJ in doing some
2 things that were the right way, or
3 what -- and as we went through that
4 process we adopted new testing. That
5 testing resulted in the Quant-Q and ACT
6 Aspire Reading and Science. And as it
7 says down at the bottom, the changes that
8 we've made, ultimately, have not
9 significantly impacted, you know, our
10 students within our admitted class.

11 We want to go ahead and go to the next
12 slide. Currently, as our admission
13 process stands today, where we currently
14 stand is all students apply early in the
15 fall. There's an application fee of \$100
16 for students. We do have a waiver of
17 those fees for students that are
18 economically disadvantaged. The
19 application minimums for those students is
20 that they have a CORE GPA 3.0. They're
21 enrolled in Algebra I as a minimum, and
22 they have to be enrolled in eighth grade
23 and be a resident in either Fairfax County
24 or one of our participating jurisdictions.

25 As they move through the process, they

1 take testing in the late fall, early
2 winter, and we use percentile ranks from
3 each of the assessments that we currently
4 use: The Quant-Q, the ACT Aspire Reading
5 and Science, and they have to maintain
6 that GPA -- the Core GPA of a 3.0.

7 For those students that meet those
8 minimum requirements at the semifinal
9 stage they move on to the final stage of
10 that and they ask two teachers to submit
11 recommendation. They return and submit
12 responses to student information sheet,
13 the problem-solving essay that I mentioned
14 just a short while ago. We continue to
15 use the percentile ranks from the previous
16 assessments, and we include the GPA, and
17 we actually have a math/science GPA as
18 well. Ultimately, what we're looking to
19 do is we're offering approximately 480 to
20 500 students on an annual basis.

21 All right. At this point in time, I'm
22 going to go ahead and move it -- return
23 this back to Dr. Brabrand and allow him to
24 move on to the next slide.

25 DR. BRABRAND: Thank you, Jeremy. I

1 want the board and our community to see
2 the impact of data and data in context as
3 we look back over TJ classes from almost
4 20 years ago. And I want to be clear,
5 admissions testing has been a barrier for
6 historically underrepresented students to
7 move to the semifinalist stage.

8 We have applicants that have talent,
9 that have merit, and those applicants are
10 drained out in the semifinalist stage
11 through the use of admissions test. It
12 has had a disproportionate impact on the
13 diversity of the existing application
14 pool.

15 Let's look at 2015, right here. You
16 can see the -- on the left, Class of 2015,
17 the applicants, those kids that have the
18 credentials to apply for TJ. And then the
19 semifinalists, which is that pool after
20 the test is administered. You can see the
21 number of black, Hispanic -- black and
22 Hispanic shrinking from applicants to
23 semifinalists.

24 We also have, not on the pie chart,
25 but just below it, the percentage of

1 English language learners and economically
2 disadvantaged. Look at the dramatic
3 impact that the test, which is having
4 those highest scores on the test, has on
5 these kids of talent and merit that are
6 English language learners and economically
7 disadvantaged kids.

8 You can see the number goes from 8
9 percent for English language learners down
10 to just over -- a little over percent,
11 almost a drop in half. And look at the
12 impact that for economically disadvantaged
13 kids. They represent a little over 7
14 percent of the pool, back in 2015, but
15 then when that test is administered, just
16 a little over 1 percent.

17 If we can go to the next slide, 2019.
18 You can see the compression happens for
19 our African-American students, for our
20 Hispanic student, for our English language
21 learners, and for our economically
22 disadvantaged. Same kind of shrinking or
23 draining out of talent and merit in the
24 first pool that does not exist in the
25 second pool when the test is administered.

1 Again, you can see those numbers go
2 down from -- from our Hispanic from 7 to 4
3 percent, from African-American from 7 to 2
4 percent, from English language learners
5 from a little over 2.6 percent to just 1
6 percent, and economically disadvantaged,
7 again, taking a tremendous drop from 6
8 percent to just over 2 percent.

9 And then, again, just recently, let's
10 go to the next slide. The class of 2024,
11 the same kind of compression, and the
12 numbers only getting worse. A shrinkage
13 for our African-American from 6 to 1
14 percent. A shrinkage of English language
15 learners after the administration of the
16 test to less than 1 percent, 0.6 percent.
17 And our economically disadvantaged are in
18 the pool at over 7 percent, down to just a
19 bit over 1 percent for the semifinalist.

20 Admissions testing has been a barrier
21 for historically underrepresented
22 students. It has drained merit from the
23 pool, it has drained talent from the pool.

24 I'd like to share with you now, our
25 merit lottery proposal. This is

1 about -- if we can go to the next slide,
2 expanding our talent search. The talent
3 is right before our eyes, it's right in
4 the pool, and this merit lottery will
5 expand the talent and elevate that talent
6 so that we have the sort of equity of
7 access and opportunity that say we do in
8 our strategic plan here in Fairfax County
9 Public Schools.

10 If we could go to the process
11 overview, you've already heard Jeremy
12 outline on the left, our current process.
13 Our proposed process would keep many of
14 the requirements to apply and, in fact, we
15 would increase the Core Class GPA from a
16 3.0 to a 3.5. We would still maintain the
17 Algebra I requirement and residency
18 requirements. And we would -- of course,
19 in the proposed process revise our student
20 information sheet to include a
21 questionnaire and essay to get at students
22 interests and passion for going to a
23 school with science and technology as it's
24 focus.

25 We would then apply our merit lottery.

1 What a proposed process would remove is
2 the application fee, which is a hundred
3 dollars; the assessment percentile
4 ranking, where we make test scores that
5 important piece in the semifinalist round;
6 removing teacher recommendations, which
7 we've already heard from our AAP study
8 about the potential bias in those
9 recommendations; and the problem-solving
10 essay.

11 If we go to the next slide, in the
12 merit lottery process students would be
13 placed into lottery pathways after a
14 holistic review. Students would then be
15 randomly selected within their pathways.
16 Offer letters would be sent, and students
17 would have a designated time frame to
18 accept or reject their offer. And it
19 would be our goal to have rolling
20 admissions established to keep a class of
21 500, which is slightly up from the number
22 of students we have in our current
23 freshman class.

24 If we can go to the next slide.
25 Pathways have been designated to ensure

1 equitable access for students across all
2 regions in FCPS and in participating
3 jurisdictions. That includes Arlington
4 County, Fairfax County, Falls Church City,
5 Loudoun County, and Prince William County.
6 Qualified students will be selected by a
7 merit lottery within each of the pathways.

8 Let me share that in a little bit more
9 detail on the next slide. You can see a
10 breakdown of the pathways here on this
11 slide. The numbers represented are based
12 on the allowed ratio student cap for the
13 19-20 freshman application. So in
14 Fairfax, we currently have 350 seats for
15 Thomas Jefferson. The pathways would be
16 divided by 70 per region. Loudoun which
17 sends a significant number of students,
18 would be almost equal to one of our
19 regions in the number of students that
20 they send, and it would be at about 62
21 seats. Arlington at 18 seats, Falls
22 Church at 2 seats, and Prince William,
23 again, very similar to Loudoun at 68
24 seats. Private school applicants will be
25 assigned a pathway based on their

1 residency.

2 I also want to show that pathway
3 composition in more detail for Fairfax
4 County Public Schools. Applicants would
5 be placed in region based on the student's
6 base school. So for Region 1, you can see
7 those base schools, Region 2, Region 3,
8 Region 4, and Region 5. And I share each
9 Region would have -- through the merit
10 lottery process, 70 spots for kids who
11 have the merit and the talent to attend
12 Thomas Jefferson.

13 We recognize that -- we recognize the
14 impact of creating this opportunity.
15 This -- this approach creates geographic
16 diversity across Fairfax and participating
17 jurisdictions instead of a county-level
18 approach in Fairfax. The school approach
19 was not used due to consistency with our
20 participating jurisdictions, and our
21 process does drive the process for our
22 participating jurisdictions.

23 I'd like Jeremy, now, to explain a
24 little bit more in detail the rolling
25 admissions process that we use with this

1 merit lottery proposal. Jeremy.

2 MR. SHUGHART: Thank you,
3 Dr. Brabrand. In terms of the rolling
4 admissions process, what -- what happened
5 and what would occur is, we'll maintain a
6 list of all the students per pathway,
7 whether that's the five pathways in
8 Fairfax County and each pathway for the
9 individual counties and the City of Falls
10 Church. That would maintain that list of
11 students in the order in which they're
12 drawn.

13 So as an opening occurs within each of
14 those particular pathways, we would select
15 or we would fill that student based upon
16 the next available or the next qualified
17 student on the list within the pathway.
18 In the event a pathway that is a non-FCPS
19 pathway should exhaust all of those lists
20 of students, the next eligible candidate
21 would come from an overall Fairfax County
22 School listing.

23 As needed, we would add additional
24 applicants through offers on the 1st and
25 15th of every month, through the end of

1 the first quarter of their freshman year.
2 Again, this is in order to maintain that
3 class of 500.

4 And finally, just one point of note,
5 any student who declines their offer of
6 admissions would be removed from future
7 eligibility within the rolling admissions
8 process. What that means is if they -- if
9 they said, no, they didn't want it at the
10 time, they would not get added back in at
11 a later date.

12 Okay. Dr. Brabrand.

13 DR. BRABRAND: Thank you, Jeremy. I
14 want to show you, again, going back
15 through time what the impact of a merit
16 lottery could have done and can do for our
17 students here in Fairfax County. On the
18 left, would the be the percent of offered
19 students with the current process that
20 we've used. On the right, would be the
21 application of a merit lottery. Going
22 back to the class of 2015, many, many
23 years ago. You can see, instead of the
24 shrinking of the pie, we see an increase
25 in the number of students who would have

1 the opportunity to participate. An
2 increase in our African-American, in our
3 Latino students, from, again, 1 and 3
4 percent up to 6 percent. From
5 economically disadvantaged to almost twice
6 the number of kids. And our English
7 language learners back in the Class of
8 2015 would go up almost nine times the
9 percentage, from less than a percent to
10 almost 9 percent.

11 I do want to be clear here, as we're
12 talking about this, that the selection is
13 on the application and a minimum of GPA of
14 3.5. That's an unweighted GPA at the end
15 of seventh grade, and it includes the
16 first quarter of eighth grade. That's
17 Core Academic grades only, it includes
18 World Language for high school credit, and
19 our recommendation would be to also
20 include the second quarter for eighth
21 grade marks.

22 Let me show you this over time -- is
23 I've said as well. If we can go to the
24 next slide, the Class of 2019. You can
25 see the same expansion of the pie. Again,

1 from 2 percent to 6 percent for our
2 Hispanic students. From 2 percent to 8
3 percent for African-American, and, again,
4 for economically disadvantaged only 1
5 percent to almost 9 percent. And doubling
6 the number for English language learners.
7 That is so, so powerful.

8 I know one of the things as I'm going
9 through these slides, some have asked
10 about special education. Those -- that
11 information is not captured in our current
12 application process. That's something
13 that we can obviously work to try get
14 further information on. We took a long
15 time to try to look at that data, but that
16 data is not captured through our TJ
17 Admissions process.

18 We believe, not only will we see the
19 increase in underrepresented kids that
20 include racial and ethnic identity,
21 economically disadvantaged, second
22 language, but we believe will also lower
23 the barrier for increased access of
24 special education kids, including those
25 that are twice exceptional, will benefit

1 from this merit lottery proposal.

2 If you go on to take a look at the
3 very final class, the Class of 2024,
4 again, the same kind of increases from 1
5 percent of our African-American to 7
6 percent. From 3 percent of our Latino to
7 8 percent. Look at this most recent,
8 economically disadvantaged only 6/10ths of
9 a percent are getting in after the
10 administration of the TJ Admissions test.
11 A merit lottery would bring 10 percent of
12 our economically disadvantaged students to
13 give them the equity of opportunity to
14 access to be able to participate in Thomas
15 Jefferson. Our English language learners,
16 again, less than a percent to a little
17 over 3.4 percent.

18 Again, the merit lottery is breaking
19 down barriers. It is time for this wall
20 to come down in Fairfax County Public
21 Schools. I want to now turn it over to
22 Marty Smith to go through the critical
23 decision timeline that we need to share
24 with the board and the community.

25 MR. SMITH: Thanks, Dr. Brabrand. So

1 I -- I do want to point out the timeline
2 here that you see on the screen. This is
3 a process that we currently have on hold,
4 given that we know we have some outreach
5 with the community and input from the
6 school board before moving forward. But I
7 do want to show you what our current
8 timeline is.

9 So we normally have our application
10 process begin in the fall, and we would
11 have been in the process -- beginning the
12 process for ordering those testing
13 materials for students with our testing
14 occurring in the late fall and that
15 semifinalist release mid-January, giving
16 those students information as to whether
17 or not they made the semifinalist round.
18 With our final offers happening in April.

19 And so we did want to provide this
20 adjusted timeline for our community to
21 understand that while the process is on
22 hold, if we move forward with this
23 particular process this will be the
24 particular timeline.

25 As you can see with our revised

1 process, where we are now, we are
2 presenting this to the board today. The
3 superintendent has built in opportunities
4 for community outreach and town halls that
5 will occur in late September or early
6 October. We will then be bringing a final
7 proposal back to the school board on
8 October 8th based on information gathered
9 during those community town halls.

10 And then if this process is
11 recommended to move forward, we will then
12 begin that targeted outreach process. We
13 will then make revisions to Regulation
14 3355, which outlines our process for
15 admissions for TJ that would occur in the
16 late fall. We would develop then the
17 revised process in the fall and winter
18 with an application going out in December
19 or January. And then the merit lottery
20 occurring in February or March. And so
21 this, again, what that timeline would like
22 if this process is recommended.

23 I do want to talk just a little bit
24 more about our efforts around targeted
25 outreach. We know that, as Dr. Brabrand

1 has said that the test has been a barrier
2 for students. We've had some outreach in
3 the past with going to middle schools,
4 going to elementary schools, and talking
5 about STEM, providing STEM opportunities
6 for students. But we really haven't been
7 as targeted with our outreach as we
8 possibly could be. So I want to invite
9 Dr. Ann Bonitatibus, principal at TJ to
10 talk about some of our targeted outreach
11 efforts that are part of this proposal.

12 DR. BONITATIBUS: Thank you for this
13 opportunity. First, I would just like to
14 comment that at TJ we are a wonderfully
15 diverse school and we celebrate that
16 diversity every day and we understand and
17 recognize FCPS efforts to ensure that we
18 more demographically representative of the
19 region.

20 In terms of outreach, I have been
21 participating with the TJ admissions
22 office for the past couple years as
23 they've gone out and delivered
24 introductory messages to communities, and
25 we have often looked at schools in

1 particular who receive additional grant
2 moneys for socially economic disadvantageded
3 students. We also want to make sure that
4 when we're talking about outreach, I -- I
5 like to think of it in terms of "you can
6 push out or you can pull in." And I'm
7 more -- and I'm very interested in TJ more
8 inreach, where we are inviting others to
9 come into TJ so that way young students
10 can see that they can be a part of TJ.

11 We receive grant funds where we are
12 able to bring students in to planetarian
13 shows. Perhaps we could do more with
14 students accessing our labs when our labs
15 are not being used for our students. And
16 just having the opportunity to interact
17 with our students.

18 TJ has hundreds of students that serve
19 as STEM ambassadors, and they visit
20 schools because we know that young
21 children will often look to other
22 children, older children, to mentor them
23 and to inspire them. Not just the adults.
24 And so we'll continue in our efforts
25 through our clubs and activities to make

1 those connections out in the community.

2 And I believe that -- that with
3 ongoing efforts with outreach and inreach
4 that we will be able to -- and just really
5 inspire future generations of those
6 students to come to TJ where they can see
7 themselves here at our school. Thank you.

8 DR. BRABRAND: Thank you, Ann. If we
9 can go to the next slide. We recognize
10 that what we are sharing with today in
11 enhancing the admissions process, that is
12 just one step in a multi-pronged strategy.
13 We also know that we need to enhance and
14 expand the pipeline of talent. Developing
15 that talent and ensuring that talent has
16 equitable access to rigorous STEM
17 instruction at the elementary and middle
18 school level. We've done some work in
19 this area, but we have to acknowledge we
20 have more work to do, and we will do it.

21 We also know that we need to ensure a
22 caring culture for all of our TJ students.
23 All of our TJ students, including the TJ
24 students there right now need more support
25 for transition resources to make sure

1 they're going into a culture and climate
2 in which they will be successful and fell
3 success, but, also, where they will feel
4 included, feel respected, and feel apart
5 -- a complete part of the TJ community.

6 We know creating this caring culture
7 also means more professional development
8 for our staff at TJ, who do an amazing
9 job, who are world class, and we need to
10 be sure they continue to do all they can
11 to have the tools that they need to
12 support unique needs of all of our
13 learners.

14 We also need to understand, in this
15 time, maybe more than ever, the kind of
16 wrap-around support for students that's
17 needed. We have to particularly address
18 the social emotional supports, where we
19 want excellence, but we don't want to
20 create an unhealthy environment where we
21 have a pressure cooker that does not give
22 students the support and the social
23 emotional supports they need to be
24 resilient and to have and maintain a
25 passion, a love for science and technology

1 and math that will stay with them their
2 entire life.

3 I want to just share that there is an
4 appendix here that has a link to other
5 schools using the lottery system. Many of
6 these are highly rated. You can see one
7 of the first is the Basis Schools. We
8 Basis Schools actually out here in
9 Northern Virginia. They're using this in
10 Arizona, and you can see other districts
11 and places that are using the merit
12 lottery system.

13 I want to be clear with you today,
14 that we have been talking -- this board
15 and the prior board, we have worked hard
16 around equity, we have made efforts around
17 our TJ admissions process, but we have not
18 gotten the outcomes that truly allow us to
19 fully represent the full talent that is in
20 the pool of applicants for TJ.

21 We are recommending, and I plan to
22 move forward with this process after
23 community engagement, but it is my hope
24 that we will move forward with this merit
25 lottery to increase the equity of

1 opportunity in access for all of our
2 students. We've shown you here, clearly,
3 that the tests -- the TJ admissions tests
4 for years and years and years has been a
5 barrier to students of talent, to students
6 of merit, and it is time -- that
7 admissions test hasn't really just been a
8 barrier, it's been a lull, a lull that's
9 prevented access of opportunity for our
10 students. And it is time today to tear
11 down this wall, to move forward with a new
12 process that provides equity of
13 opportunity in access for the full range
14 of our students here in Fairfax County
15 Public Schools.

16 We are glad, now, to be willing to
17 take any questions that school board
18 members have, and I will be looking
19 forward to, again, doing community
20 engagement and updating in October when
21 that engagement is done and moving forward
22 after that feedback with the
23 recommendations that I've shared with you
24 today. So thank you very much, and we'll
25 be glad to take any questions at this

1 time.

2 MS. COHEN: Thank you so much,
3 Dr. Brabrand and Mr. Smith for your
4 presentation and Mr. Shughart, so to
5 forget you, and Principal Bonitatibus, we
6 really appreciate your participation.

7 I'd like to start with my colleague,
8 first up I have -- actually,
9 Ms. McLaughlin asked if she could first,
10 she has a time commitment, so
11 Dr. Anderson, unless you have an
12 objection, I'd like to sneak her in there.
13 Thank you so much.

14 DR. ANDERSON: (Nodding head,
15 negative).

16 MS. COHEN: Ms. McLaughlin, you have
17 the floor. Oh, I think we lost
18 Ms. McLaughlin.

19 Dr. Anderson, if you don't mind
20 stepping while hopefully, she tries to
21 reconnect.

22 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: I've reconnected.

23 DR. ANDERSON: No problem. And if she
24 comes in, I'm happy to stop because I do
25 know she has a time constraint.

1 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Dr. Anderson, you go
2 right ahead, I've reconnected, but you go
3 ahead.

4 DR. ANDERSON: Are you sure.

5 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Yep. No problem.

6 DR. ANDERSON: Okay. Thank you.
7 First of all, Dr. Brabrand and staff,
8 thank you for this presentation. I think
9 many of us will definitely agree this is
10 overdue and a long time coming.

11 One of the things that I do want to
12 share, even though it's been articulated,
13 I wanted to underscore that I don't
14 believe -- and I don't think that any of
15 us believe that this is end all to be able
16 to resolve the issues that we have going
17 on at TJ. We have a pipeline situation
18 that must be addressed, but we talking
19 about what happens at the middle schools,
20 what happens in the AP centers, what
21 happens as student qualify for AP centers,
22 and the preparations that many families
23 are able to offer to their students and
24 brought to TJ.

25 Having said that I'm going to kind of

1 dig into my questions regarding the plan
2 that you have here. Before I go there,
3 Dr. Brabrand, it is well known that both
4 you and Ms. Keys-Gamarra are part of the
5 Governors Task Force to make
6 recommendations for whatever action that
7 the State chooses to -- to take. Can you
8 share a little bit in terms of what some
9 of the proposed recommendations have been?
10 What those discussions just generally have
11 been at that level?

12 DR. BRABRAND: Thank you, Chairman
13 Anderson, and I certainly invite School
14 Board Member Karen Keys-Gamarra to share
15 her insights as well.

16 There have been discussions, I don't
17 believe at this time that the Secretary of
18 Education has provided any final
19 recommendations from his task force. He
20 did have an informal group that was -- he
21 was receiving feedback from, and I know
22 that the secretary is holding multiple
23 community forums as he looks at governor
24 schools throughout the commonwealth of
25 Virginia. I certainly appreciated being

1 invited with -- invited to that forum
2 along with Ms. Keys-Gamarra, also
3 Mr. Smith and Ms. -- Mr. Shughart and
4 Ms. Bonitatibus were all invited and I
5 appreciate that outreach.

6 And, again, we'll wait to see what his
7 final recommendations are, but I think
8 it's important for us to decide what's
9 best here in Fairfax County, and we need
10 to take the steps that we believe are
11 correct. And so we'll certainly those
12 with the board when they're completed, but
13 I don't have those -- I don't have those
14 at this time. And I'd be glad to let
15 Ms. Keys-Gamarra share any insights.

16 DR. ANDERSON: Ms. Keys-Gamarra, if
17 you wouldn't mind.

18 MS. KEYS-GAMARRA: Oh, of course. Of
19 course. Actually, one of the motions I
20 have would allow a greater, more in depth
21 conversation with the documents that were
22 shared, which I think is completely
23 appropriate.

24 Just to give folks an overview of what
25 did transpired. We met four or five

1 times, a number of legislators were
2 brought forward, and a lot of students,
3 which was extremely valuable to hear their
4 direct report of what their experiences
5 have been. These were both students who
6 were currently attending our governor
7 schools, as well as students from the
8 past. There had also been one student who
9 -- who had done a survey of a different
10 governor school, the Maggie Walker down in
11 the Richmond area.

12 And what I was struck by was that
13 there was pretty much a unanimous view
14 about the culture of these schools being
15 not as healthy as I know all of us this
16 board would like to hear from our
17 students. This is not to discount, you
18 know, all the positive things going on and
19 that sort of thing.

20 But I think the thing that struck me
21 the most was that there were enough
22 incidents that people were reporting that
23 would fall in the category of what we
24 discuss at the last work session about how
25 there could be racial incidents and how

1 they had not been handle properly. And so
2 what it underscored for me was some of the
3 work that we talked about this morning.

4 Now, there were -- we did have a
5 presentation and -- and I hope to have an
6 opportunity in the future to bring forward
7 the documents that were submitted to us.
8 They did look at the history of both
9 Maggie Walker, as well as TJ and the
10 primary, you know, concern is that what
11 that creates. And one of the things that
12 stuck with me that were a number past
13 students who simply said, as adults they
14 wouldn't send their children into that
15 environment. And so we really have to do
16 some work to figure out what trauma that
17 can create by students feeling
18 particularly isolated.

19 Dr. Brabrand is correct when he says
20 that there were no specific
21 recommendations, but there a number of
22 choices that were discussed. For example,
23 they didn't think that lottery alone, as
24 well as a number students from each
25 individual region would alone address the

1 diversity concerns. They were concerned
2 about the number of students who took
3 math, and -- and didn't qualify or how
4 they were eliminated along the way.

5 And so I would say that there is great
6 interest in this community, across the
7 state in this issue, and so I'll use my --
8 my time to discuss that at a later point.
9 But with respect to this particular group,
10 I think that there were a number of
11 documents that also need to be shared, and
12 I'll try to make sure I get to you guys
13 later, in addition to the letter I
14 provided you earlier.

15 DR. ANDERSON: Thank you. I'm going
16 to dive into my questions a little bit
17 regarding the regional approach.

18 Dr. Brabrand, if you wouldn't mind,
19 kind of helping me conceptualize what we
20 have here. If we have 70 seats per region
21 and I'm in Region 2, where we have six
22 school, are we anticipating placing all of
23 the kids who qualify for each six schools
24 and then pulling out 70 randomly. Can you
25 confirm that for me, please?

1 DR. BRABRAND: Thank you, Chairman
2 Anderson. Jeremy, can you speak to the
3 specifics of how we will conduct the merit
4 lottery for each of the regions.

5 MR. SHUGHART: Sure, Dr. Brabrand. So
6 the -- the idea is that once they go
7 through the -- the process to be selected
8 to be part of the lottery, that each
9 region would hold it's own lottery. So
10 Region 1 would have their -- all the
11 students that would appropriate in that
12 particular region, would then have a
13 lottery, a random draw in terms of
14 sequence. So the top 70 students -- or
15 the first 70 students, maybe not the top,
16 but the first 70 students would be
17 offered, and then there would be a
18 sequential order based on the lottery
19 draw. That same process would be repeated
20 for all five regions in Fairfax County.
21 It would also be repeated for all of our
22 participating jurisdictions, as well.

23 So your example of Region 2, the
24 students, in terms of their base school,
25 would be assigned to their specific

1 region, and then all students who had
2 applied and made -- went through the
3 process with the GPA, the questionnaires,
4 those items would then be placed as a
5 whole into that group, and then we would
6 draw based upon on the number students
7 there.

8 DR. ANDERSON: Okay. Thank you. Did
9 you -- do you have any information
10 regarding the students, any class, in
11 terms of what that breakdown is per
12 region? Maybe the Class of 2024 or 2020,
13 either one.

14 MR. SHUGHART: So if we look at the
15 Class of 2024, the regions, as well as the
16 participating jurisdictions, do vary. So
17 if you're looking numbers, what we're
18 looking at terms of Region 1, was -- and I
19 should give this some caveat because at
20 the time we did not include our private
21 school students in there, so that would
22 make an adjustment, which we would have to
23 account for in the future.

24 But if you look at it from Region 1
25 perspective it was 415 for Region 1, 338

1 for Region 2, 182 for Region 3, 165 for
2 Region 4, and 274 for Region 5. Do you
3 want me to include the -- would you like
4 to include the -- the numbers for the
5 participating jurisdictions.

6 DR. ANDERSON: I don't think so. I
7 think that suffices for what I'm trying to
8 find right now. One of the things that I
9 wanted to articular in my concerns
10 regarding this regional approach is this.
11 When I took a look at the -- that
12 spreadsheet that you shared with us some
13 time ago, regarding how many students from
14 each school -- were -- applied and were
15 accepted to TJ from 2020 to 2024, across
16 that five-year spread, I have Glasgow,
17 Longfellow, Holmes, Jackson, Kilmer, and
18 Poe in my region. In my district, which
19 is Mason, which is essentially Glasgow,
20 Holmes, and Jackson, we have 15 students
21 from Glasgow, one from Holmes, one from
22 Poe, and 89 from Jackson that I share with
23 Providence.

24 I want to be sure that this regional
25 approach does not automatically place my

1 district at a disadvantage because we
2 already have so few students that are
3 already attending TJ. Again, one from
4 Holmes across those -- that five-year
5 spread, one from Poe, 15 from Glasgow.
6 While we have 279 from Longfellow, 89 from
7 Jackson, and 134 from Kilmer. So I want
8 to be sure that that is something that we
9 are paying attention to.

10 And I do have a number of other
11 questions, so I would like to be placed on
12 a go-back, Ms. Cohen.

13 MS. COHEN: I'll be happy to put you
14 on a go-back.

15 DR. ANDERSON: Thank you.

16 MS. COHEN: Next, we have
17 Ms. Keys-Gamarra.

18 MS. KEYS-GAMARRA: Ms. Cohen, could I
19 respond to Ms. Anderson.

20 MS. COHEN: Yeah. I'm sorry, I
21 apologize, and we also have Ms. McLaughlin
22 who I promised that we would get to her in
23 time. So, yes, please respond if you
24 will, and then we'll head to
25 Ms. McLaughlin. I apologize.

1 MR. SMITH: So this is Mr. Smith
2 speaking, I would say about the regional
3 approach with regard to the number of
4 students. While we know we would be
5 looking at that equity across regions,
6 it's also important to think about that
7 targeted outreach slide where we talked
8 about concerns that students knew about
9 TJ. One of the things that we didn't
10 cover but that is in the presentation is
11 that part of this is sending those
12 recruitment e-mails and letters to all
13 eligible students.

14 And so a piece of this, a very big
15 piece of this, is the targeted outreach
16 where we would be encouraging more
17 students who have the merit, as
18 Dr. Brabrand talked about, to actually
19 apply to -- for TJ. And then once we are
20 able to, you know, focus those targeted
21 outreach efforts, then based on the
22 proportion of students within that overall
23 pool, we would, you know, by probability,
24 say get that same reflection for students
25 who had received those letters.

1 MS. COHEN: Dr. Anderson, does that --
2 does that answer your question?

3 DR. ANDERSON: Not really, but I'll
4 catch up with my go-back.

5 MS. COHEN: Okay. Thanks very much.
6 Sorry. Ms. McLaughlin.

7 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Thank you. Can you
8 hear me.

9 MS. COHEN: Yes, we can.

10 MR. FRISCH: Loud and clear.

11 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Great. It's not very
12 clear? Is this better Karl.

13 MR. FRISCH: You're great.

14 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Oh, awesome.

15 MR. FRISCH: Yep, you're great.

16 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Okay. Please start
17 the time, Ms. Medea.

18 So let me just begin, first of all,
19 Dr. Brabrand, I really appreciate that you
20 took the time to speak with each of the
21 board members to get our thoughts at a
22 macro-level. So as a glow, I want to
23 thank you for that. But as a grow, I want
24 to share with you that I am deeply
25 concerned that the board did not have any

1 of this written information, nor the
2 public until about eleven o'clock today
3 when it was posted.

4 TJ is an internationally renowned high
5 school for, I believe, almost 35 years. I
6 do not understand this timeline, I think
7 it is extremely aggressive. Having been
8 on this board for eight years, I have been
9 a champion for us improving the diversity
10 of representation at TJ. I'm a former
11 Georgetown admissions officer, I've seen
12 how selective admissions can also ensure a
13 rich diverse university based on their
14 applicant pool.

15 But there is data missing here, we
16 don't have anything based on what the --
17 the demographics are for the applicant
18 pool to the accepted pool to who choses to
19 enroll. Those are key. We don't know
20 about why the regions were never set up in
21 any particular way that would then be
22 utilized immediately to translate into
23 defined and set admission slots. I mean,
24 universities -- selective universities
25 don't sit there and say every state gets X

1 number of spots and that's it. I mean,
2 this is a very complex and important
3 process and I think we can there, but
4 there's no analysis that you've provided
5 from the other five schools or across the
6 country that you're sliding in the
7 appendix.

8 So my first question, Dr. Brabrand, is
9 why are you rushing this, when we need to
10 make sure we do this right, not that we
11 just do it fast?

12 DR. BRABRAND: Well, thanks,
13 Ms. McLaughlin. A couple of things.
14 First, let me just say about community
15 outreach. There's a lot of outreach that
16 is going to be going on. I know that TJ
17 Partnership Fund has a town hall this
18 evening. I know that Secretary Qarni has
19 planned three community forums and has
20 already conducted some of them around TJ.
21 I am doing a town hall next Wednesday at
22 7 p.m., which I will be sharing out today
23 in a news release.

24 We are setting up a dedicated webpage
25 with questions and answers, and we will

1 have a dedicated inbox to receive written
2 comments at tjcomments@fcps.edu. So we
3 will be getting all of that out.

4 I -- I think the issue of rush, are we
5 going too fast or too slow is certainly
6 something that we can have a discussion
7 about, of course with the board. But I
8 think there are many who would say that
9 this is a discussion that has gone on year
10 after year, and it's time to do something
11 differently. We've not gotten the results
12 of really capturing all the talent that we
13 had in the pool. And, again, this is
14 merit already in the pool that is getting
15 drained out because of the application of
16 the admissions test.

17 So I do think -- I do think the time
18 is now to do it if we're going to do for
19 the admissions for next year. We have to
20 make a decision soon because if not, we
21 have to begin to administer the TJ
22 admissions this fall to be ready to do
23 that work in the winter. We also have, as
24 you may know, that the state did ask the
25 general assembly as part of the budget

1 process for all governor schools including
2 Thomas Jefferson to submit a plan around
3 how to expand access of opportunity for
4 governor school by October 1st.

5 I asked for and received an additional
6 week from the Secretary of Education, and
7 I have factored that in. So those
8 are -- that's my feedback and I
9 appreciate -- I appreciate comments.

10 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: So I -- I appreciate
11 what you just shared Dr. Brabrand. A plan
12 does not mean you have to then execute the
13 next week. So I think that we're talking
14 three weeks from now you would be bringing
15 this back to the board with the community
16 feedback, saying "go/no go." And there is
17 no way, while we're in the midst of
18 pandemic -- we are supposed to be trying
19 to figure out how to bring 189,000 back to
20 in--person learning. At minimum, we're
21 trying just to figure out what's going to
22 happen in the next quarter.

23 I am absolutely ask all of my
24 colleagues, do not signal to the
25 superintendent that we're going to change

1 TJ admissions three weeks from now. I am
2 deeply committed to saying, we're going to
3 get all of the details so that desire to
4 fix this is there, the appropriate
5 solution, you mess this up and you mess up
6 not only one of the most revered
7 governor's schools in the country, this
8 will be devastating to our school system
9 and our school boards and our community's
10 reputation. So --

11 MS. COHEN: Thank you, Ms. McLaughlin,
12 I -- I appreciate it and if you would like
13 to have a go-back, I'm happy to add you
14 back.

15 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: You can put me on
16 incase I'm still able to stay on. Thank
17 you.

18 MS. COHEN: I'm sorry. Thanks very
19 much. Ms. Keys-Gamarra, you're up and
20 then followed by Ms. Tholen -- sorry.
21 Followed by Ms. Corbett Sanders.

22 MS. THOLEN: Was there any response to
23 that? I'm happy to go, but I didn't want
24 to cut anybody off.

25 MS. COHEN: I'm so sorry. I didn't

1 hear a question at the end, other than
2 just address to colleagues. So I didn't
3 hear anything for staff to answer to
4 there. Maybe if Ms. McLaughlin feels
5 differently, she's certainly welcome to
6 weigh in?

7 MS. THOLEN: Okay.

8 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Well, I would -- I
9 would like Dr. Brabrand to answer why,
10 while were in the midst of a pandemic, why
11 is he not considering that we submit our
12 plan, but we don't execute until next
13 year's admissions process? I'd like an
14 answer to that.

15 DR. BRABRAND: Well, my quickest
16 answer is, if the board choses that, you
17 will have the same results that you had
18 last spring and the spring before that and
19 five years before that and a decade before
20 that. I arrived as an intern 25 years
21 ago, and TJ admissions was a subject of
22 major debate in this county. We have made
23 good-faith efforts over multiple boards,
24 to try to improve the TJ admissions
25 process, and I think we have to

1 acknowledge it has not -- it is falling
2 short of what we have wanted.

3 And I think this is the moment when we
4 are saying it's time for a call to action
5 for equity, that we need to do something
6 differently, and this is one step in a
7 multi-pronged approach that can help us
8 improve -- improve our advanced academics
9 programs, including improving -- improving
10 TJ. Thank you.

11 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: But, Dr. Brabrand --

12 MS. COHEN: Thank you so much, Doctor.
13 Well, Ms. McLaughlin --

14 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: But he didn't answer
15 my question.

16 MS. COHEN: I'm so sorry,
17 Ms. McLaughlin, but you -- and
18 Dr. Brabrand has answered to the best of
19 his --

20 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Well, he's supposed
21 to answer -- no --

22 MS. COHEN: Ms. McLaughlin, I really
23 appreciate -- I very much appreciate your
24 passion and your frustration, but we're
25 going to need to move on to

1 Ms. Keys-Gamarra and if you're here for
2 go-back, I'm so happy to yield you the
3 floor.

4 Ms. Keys-Gamarra, you're up.

5 MS. KEYS-GAMARRA: So I wasn't going
6 to start with this, but I think I have to.
7 We are in a very different position this
8 year than we have been in previous years,
9 and even if we wanted to do what we've
10 previously done, I don't know how we
11 could. We are having a virtual start.
12 I'm not sure how we are going to test
13 students while we're in a pandemic.

14 According to your timeline, we would
15 be entering that phase, you know, in a few
16 weeks anyway, and so I think based on
17 where we are right now, there will have to
18 be some changes. And those changes are
19 forces upon us due to the circumstances of
20 the pandemic. So I -- I would have
21 difficulty saying that it's going to be
22 business as usual, when we know that so
23 many students have been disadvantaged
24 simply by virtue of the fact that we are
25 in a pandemic and students of color,

1 students economically disadvantaged,
2 students with disabilities have been the
3 students who have been most negatively
4 impacted during this time period.

5 So I think we have to think about how
6 we're going to handle this in -- during
7 the pandemic and so I support trying to
8 come with a plan. I will say this
9 Dr. Brabrand, and I -- and I think I'm
10 probably going run out of time, so let me
11 get to the punchline and come back to the
12 details later.

13 I would for this board to consider
14 that we very -- the board very much has to
15 be a part of these discussions to the
16 extent that we can. We are in a rushed
17 timeline. The super -- I'm sorry.
18 Mr. Qarni, Secretary of Education, has let
19 us know that the state will be making some
20 recommendations effective immediately.
21 And I understand that because we are
22 dealing with the pandemic, so I would like
23 to plan to have additional work sessions,
24 as well as have school board members
25 specifically on this topic so that we can

1 look at some of the historical
2 information. There's a wealth of
3 information from MSAOC, there are number
4 of documents from the task force, there's
5 the Blue Ribbon Commission study that was
6 done many, many years ago. So there is a
7 wealth of information with a number
8 recommendations were made even without a
9 pandemic, recognizing that we have a
10 problem.

11 And so I think that we have to -- we
12 have to realize that we are in an urgent
13 emergency situation, and we have to make
14 that kind of decision. If there's
15 anything else that I can hit on, it is
16 that I was so horribly grieved by the
17 number of students who have contacted me,
18 not just during the task force, but since
19 that time about the atmosphere that we
20 have to talk about, which I hope we can do
21 when set up -- hopefully we agree to setup
22 a committee to work on this.

23 MS. COHEN: Thank you,
24 Ms. Keys-Gamarra.

25 Dr. Brabrand, do you have a response?

1 DR. BRABRAND: Well, I'll certainly
2 continue to listen to Ms. Keys-Gamarra and
3 the other board members about how we do
4 engagement over the next three weeks. You
5 know, we -- we -- we're doing a lot. We
6 can do -- work with the school board
7 around that engagement and talk about how
8 school board members can also be getting
9 feedback to help inform us. And as far as
10 committees or how to do the work over the
11 next three weeks, you know, I'll certainly
12 be willing to listen. I agree with
13 Ms. Keys-Gamarra, that it is not business
14 as usual, it is a moment, this is a moment
15 for us to do the right thing for our kids,
16 and the right thing for equity. And I --
17 I hope that the board will embrace this
18 moment. I do believe it's a moment that
19 we can really create true equity of access
20 and opportunity for all of our students.

21 MS. COHEN: Thanks very much.

22 Ms. Corbett Sanders, you have the floor.

23 MS. CORBETT SANDERS: Thank you. A
24 couple things. One, I do want to bring
25 attention to all of colleagues that this

1 concept of a merit-based admission without
2 a test, because that's really what we're
3 talking about, is merit-based on GPA and a
4 holistic review of kids. That is
5 consistent with over a thousand
6 universities across the United States,
7 including Stanford, Columbia, Barnard,
8 voted many of the top schools in the
9 country. So I don't think that this out
10 of -- out of the ordinary to pursue a
11 merit-based system that is not based on a
12 test.

13 Secondly -- having said that, I have a
14 couple of questions. What are the
15 measures of effectiveness and what's the
16 process for evaluating whether or not this
17 is effective?

18 Secondly, what do we do about the
19 families that move into the region after
20 the first semester of eighth grade.

21 Third, you have set the October 8th
22 meeting as when you will next update the
23 board, but that is the same day that you
24 are supposed to submit something to
25 Richmond, and our meeting is on the

1 evening of the 8th. Is it your intention
2 to submit something to the state without
3 this board reviewing it seeing the
4 outcome? And if not, then why aren't we
5 asking for a delay longer than October 8th
6 for the -- for the state submission.

7 And then the last piece, is -- there
8 are two others. Math. Math and science
9 in our elementary schools, I fully support
10 making sure that we fidelity of
11 implementation, but we actually have to
12 consistency where every single one of our
13 elementary schools has the same level of
14 academic rigor in the maths and sciences,
15 and at the same level of opportunities.
16 We have schools with science fairs; we
17 have others that don't. We have schools
18 that start advance math in sixth grade; we
19 have others that start in second grade.
20 So we need to address that pipeline issue
21 in making sure that the FCPS promise is
22 honored by all and not by some.

23 And then the last -- another piece is,
24 a few years ago there was outrage at TJ
25 because after changes to the test, there

1 was a significant number of new students
2 that were admitted and then there were
3 concerns because they had to do
4 remediation on math. What are you doing
5 to work with the -- the teachers at TJ so
6 that they understand that in the same way
7 that we do remediation and mitigation of
8 gaps with students at every other high
9 school, that that can be expected at TJ,
10 as well?

11 And I think that's it's for now, but
12 in general, I think you're on the right
13 track and it's consistent with what some
14 of the top universities have done.

15 MS. COHEN: Thank you. Dr. Brabrand,
16 would you like to address the timeline
17 question first?

18 DR. BRABRAND: Yeah. Well, first off
19 all, I -- I asked for October 9th, which
20 is the day after, and I can certainly ask
21 they extend it if necessary, if that's the
22 next step from the board, I can certainly
23 go back to the Secretary of Education and
24 see if we can get a longer timeline.

25 The effectiveness would be, again, as

1 we've tried to share on those slides, a
2 greater percentage of the diversity of
3 FCPS and our final admissions group to TJ.
4 And we were showing that sort of
5 semifinalist applicant pool. We want the
6 applicant pool and the actual admissions
7 class to be closer. And, again, the
8 applicant pool will still have to have
9 criteria met to be in the applicant pool,
10 including a revised GPA from a 3.0 to a
11 3.5.

12 I'd have to have Jeremy answer the
13 first semester eighth grade question, and
14 I'll give him a second to do that in a
15 minute. And Ann can talk a little bit
16 about working with the faculty. We do
17 have plans to work with the faculty and
18 are working faculty. And then I would
19 tell that the consistency and -- around
20 math and science is certainly something we
21 need to talk about and will be talking
22 about that next month when we do our AAP
23 recommendations. But Jeremy and Ann do
24 you want to make some comments to
25 Ms. Corbett Sanders questions?

1 MR. SHUGHART: Ms. Corbett Sanders can
2 clarify the question you said there, just
3 so I make sure I'm responding to you in
4 terms of what you had said?

5 MS. CORBETT SANDERS: So I had a
6 number of questions regarding the eighth
7 grade. We have people who move in -- move
8 into our district or into neighboring
9 districts after their children are in
10 eighth grade. What are -- how would they
11 fall into this pool, given that they miss
12 that initial cutoff period? Today we have
13 later admissions by students, what you are
14 suggesting is that we would not have -- it
15 sounds like we wouldn't have summer
16 program for admission for late commers to
17 the area.

18 MR. SHUGHART: Correct. We did not --
19 in this proposal we did not include a
20 summer round. Our consideration was
21 adding them into the applicant pool but
22 not part of the lottery pool. If they
23 meet the qualifications but not
24 necessarily redrawing the lottery. But
25 that's certainly -- it could be something

1 we could consider.

2 MS. CORBETT SANDERS: So --

3 MR. SHUGHART: So the other add on to
4 this that I would say is that our
5 consideration is also to then have
6 adjustments to our sophomore round
7 admissions, as well. That would be
8 reflective of what -- what we're proposing
9 for our freshman round. So that way
10 students that are coming in late because
11 we're dramatically altering when the
12 application round is and it's a much later
13 time frame in the year, there's -- there
14 will be fewer students that wouldn't be --
15 be eligible to be able to apply, having a
16 potential December/January time frame for
17 the application. So we are closer toward
18 the end of the school year than what we
19 were previously.

20 Our previous spring or summer round,
21 as we called it, was actually in
22 mid-spring. They were typically -- they
23 were -- they had to have their submissions
24 or their applications completed in --
25 before the end of April, you know, so were

1 only off by just a couple months there, in
2 terms of the last few years.

3 MS. CORBETT SANDERS: So the other
4 questions were regarding remediation and
5 the support for remediation in the school,
6 and the other piece was -- and this -- I
7 was not focusing on only our AAP centers,
8 it was ensuring a fidelity of this math
9 and science opportunities at every school
10 and not just our -- AAP centers where we
11 also know there's a diversity in what's
12 available at each one. Does somebody want
13 to address those two questions.

14 DR. BONITATIBUS: Sure, I can address
15 your question about remediation and
16 program development. When we're working
17 with students, I like to think of looking
18 at our students from a talent search,
19 talent spot, and talent development kind
20 of framework. And I believe it's our
21 responsibility to meet the students where
22 they are as a -- to each of those
23 categorizations. And to me that's more of
24 an asset model when we're working with
25 students as opposed to deficit model.

1 Which perhaps might have been some
2 dispositions held in the past. Some of
3 those conditions you describe predate my
4 arrival at TJ. And that's not -- that's
5 certainly isn't the disposition I've seen
6 since I've been here the past three years.

7 We currently do have programs in place
8 within our mathematics department where
9 adjustments are made for the students
10 based on need so they may enter the school
11 coming in at one particular level and then
12 our teachers are very skilled working with
13 them, developing that talent, spotting the
14 talent, searching the talent, and then
15 making adjustment.

16 Additionally, any student in FCPS who
17 is enrolled in Algebra I in eighth grade,
18 can and will be on track for a TJ diploma
19 which requires the student calculus in
20 their senior year. Well, we know that we
21 have many students who excel past the
22 level of calculus. I'm confident the
23 students will be able to reach the TJ
24 diploma standards with our teachers.

25 We know that we will have to continue

1 to utilize every resource so that way for
2 students who are struggling, we are
3 providing tutoring during real time in
4 class time. That we are continuing to
5 utilize our eighth period to provide those
6 enhancements and enrichments as well.

7 The other piece is that we need to be
8 mindful that a governor's school is
9 looking for talent and particularly this
10 is reserved for -- for gifted populations.
11 And gifted students have been identified
12 as a new at-risk population. They have
13 special needs; we know that they learn
14 better in smaller environments. And we
15 need to have the resources -- I believe
16 clearly in mathematics to support students
17 because a student who may be gifted in one
18 particular as we know, does to demonstrate
19 giftedness across the board in all content
20 areas.

21 And so those are just some pieces, and
22 I know that our teachers are eager
23 to -- conversations and they're very
24 willing to support our students to meet
25 our diploma requirements.

1 MS. COHEN: Thank you. Dr. Brabrand,
2 I didn't mean to interrupt. Do you have
3 something to add?

4 DR. BRABRAND: Dr. Presidio, did you
5 want to say anything about math and
6 science in the elementary beyond advanced
7 academics that you want to share at this
8 time? Or -- or should we just plan an
9 update for October?

10 DR. PRESIDIO: I think the best course
11 would be to provide an update in October
12 when we have the work session on the AAP
13 in general. We are working very hard on
14 the fidelity of communication efforts --

15 DR. BRABRAND: Thank you.

16 MS. CORBETT SANDERS: Can I ask if
17 that's beyond the AAP, though?

18 DR. PRESIDIO: Correct. Part of
19 it -- yes. Correct. Part of it is making
20 sure that, again, as we talk about these
21 issues of opportunity and access that
22 we're ensuring that those advance math
23 opportunities, for example, are available
24 consistently across all of our schools.

25 MS. CORBETT SANDERS: Thank you.

1 MS. COHEN: Thank you. I have
2 Ms. Tholen, next, followed by Ms. Meren.

3 MS. THOLEN: Hello. Of course, this
4 whole idea of diversity in organizations
5 is a huge national issue. It's not just
6 limited to education. And is it's very
7 complex and difficult to dissect
8 and -- and figure what is the best way to
9 move forward.

10 You know, I support looking at the TJ
11 admissions. I -- I have expressed to many
12 people, many staff members, many board
13 members my interest in working on the
14 pipeline issues. And even dealing hard
15 time-consuming work that needs to happen
16 around that, and of course with -- to
17 provide support for students at TJ.

18 However, looking at the presentation
19 and what's before us today, I have to
20 agree with some of the comments by my
21 colleague, Megan McLaughlin. I'm really
22 concerned about moving forward with this
23 plan, with no community engagement or very
24 little community engagement, you know, to
25 date. I know that there have been, you

1 know, some conversations, the community
2 has not really been at the table.

3 I'm a little worried, too, about
4 the -- the use of town halls moving
5 forward over the next couple weeks. I
6 mean, I've certainly run my share of town
7 halls over the last year and a half, and
8 you can answer a lot of questions, but it
9 doesn't really give you an opportunity to
10 sit down at the table and hear from people
11 and get ideas. We have people out in our
12 community with lots of great ideas and an
13 interest to talk about this with a
14 total -- I mean, a set of viewpoints and,
15 you know, backgrounds. And I would like
16 to see more of that happen.

17 Of course, it's very difficult to do
18 that in three weeks, so I would strongly
19 encourage us to, you know, talk to the
20 state about what are options are for this
21 October deadline. Is there anyway we can
22 submit in October, you know, our community
23 engagement plan? What are we doing to
24 really -- really sit down and talk to our
25 community, you know, on this big topic?

1 I also think that there are so
2 ramifications with what we are doing, that
3 we really need to take a close look
4 at -- one specific question that I did
5 have when looking at the presentation is:
6 Where are the numbers coming from when
7 you're talking about the merit lottery and
8 you've got the pie charts showing, you
9 know, what the statistics would be if we
10 had used the merit lottery? Is that just
11 a statistical sampling? You know, where
12 does that number come from? How are we
13 using that to show that would have that
14 level of success.

15 DR. BRABRAND: Jeremy, could
16 you -- could you answer Ms. Tholen's
17 question?

18 MR. SHUGHART: Sure. So in forms of
19 the modeling, what we have is we have
20 information for all of our students at the
21 application level. And so what we were
22 able to do is we also take the applicants
23 in the various years that we had used, the
24 20 -- the Class of 2015, Class of 2019,
25 Class of '24. And then we were able to

1 take that information and then do some
2 modeling from the statistic projections of
3 what that would look like for those
4 students that met those minimums.

5 Again, this is a model for what we're
6 putting it out there. A lot of it is just
7 statistical representation in terms of
8 random -- you know, a random draw. So we
9 applied those rules to the previous
10 classes to be able to get an idea of who
11 would be meeting that, and that's how we
12 moved forward.

13 MS. THOLEN: All right. So that's one
14 way to look at it. I think we've already
15 heard, too -- we have so many questions
16 out there around, you know, who's
17 applying, why have our applications
18 numbers dropped recently over the last
19 several years. Why are some applicants
20 that are offered admission, why are they
21 not coming? What are some of the other
22 questions around that? That's why I need
23 a go-back.

24 MS. COHEN: You got it. Mr. Shughart,
25 did you want to respond to that, or...

1 MR. SHUGHART: In terms of numbers.
2 Historically, we have seen -- over the
3 last couple of years, we've seen about
4 2500 students that are applicants. Prior
5 to that, probably the five years prior to
6 that, it was closer to 3,000. But over
7 time, as you saw from the previous charts,
8 we still have large numbers of students
9 applying, and I -- and we certainly can
10 address this in the -- the go-back.

11 MS. COHEN: Thank you. We're moving
12 on to Ms. Meren, followed by Ms. Sizemore
13 Heizer.

14 MS. MEREN: Great. Thank you,
15 Ms. Cohen. So I've been listening and
16 there's two things are rumbling around in
17 my head. One is that, I've said many
18 times before, "Don't let the perfect be
19 the enemy of the good."

20 And look, students at TJ are
21 suffering. Alumni have told us heart
22 wrenching stories of what they've gone
23 through. We have letters from classes of
24 graduates with hundreds of signatures
25 saying that diversity needs to be

1 addressed. So I -- I just think that no
2 matter what we do, there won't be a
3 perfect solution.

4 But the other thing that keeps rolling
5 around in my head of is the definition of
6 "insanity" is continuing to do the same
7 thing and expecting different outcomes.

8 I thought the slide showing all the
9 steps that have been taken to marginally
10 increase access is really telling. And I
11 just don't think at this time and this era
12 with the momentum of this board and the
13 superintendent's proposal that we can sit
14 here and say, "Let's take more time.
15 Let's find more options." I mean, people
16 are hurting. We've heard from a student
17 who I've spoken many times with, who tried
18 to bleach her skin because she didn't feel
19 welcome as a black student in this school.
20 It's toxic for those students who feel
21 left out. It's toxic for students who are
22 doing the bullying. It's a diverse world.
23 We are serving our kids better when we let
24 them and help them engage with people who
25 are different than them. It's a -- it's a

1 workforce criteria these days.

2 So, you know, there's a lot about TJ I
3 don't know, but what I seem to know is --
4 I've heard a lot of community outreaches,
5 people are speaking at our regular public
6 meetings and they're -- they're e-mailing
7 us, they're sending us things. So I'm --
8 I'm ready for action and I'd like to more,
9 but I think that doing more of the same
10 won't really -- won't suffice anymore.

11 I do want to say that I am
12 disappointed to not see access for our
13 students with special needs and other
14 abilities and the newer diversity
15 population. I think that's a really big
16 factor that's lacking because we have
17 heard specifically about students who are
18 twice exceptional. And looking
19 demographically is needed, but it
20 certainly doesn't capture those students
21 and their talent and merit.

22 So I'm -- I'd also hear how TJ's
23 principal was involved with the creation
24 of this approach and what she thinks and
25 how she sees this fitting into the overall

1 efforts to make TJ even than it is now.

2 Thank you.

3 DR. BRABRAND: Thank you, Ms. Meren,
4 I'm going to let Ann speak in a moment. I
5 just want to say, the issue around twice
6 exceptional kids, we believe this proposal
7 will expand the pool for that, but as
8 Jeremy shared with me, we just don't have
9 that kind of data in the application.
10 That may be something we can work on in
11 the months ahead to bring you, as we're
12 doing the modeling and -- and Jeremy, do
13 you want to speak to that really briefly,
14 and then we'll let Ann speak to
15 Ms. Meren's question?

16 MR. SHUGHART: Sure. So in -- in
17 terms of the application process, it isn't
18 a data point that gets submitted while a
19 student applies. What we do have is only
20 a student's requested accommodations,
21 which are captured in a very different
22 way, which then blends everything together
23 between students' 504s, special ed, along
24 with anyone that might have medical
25 disabilities, or whatever the case may be.

1 However, with that said, we also know
2 that not all students that have -- that
3 are special education students, even apply
4 or even request accommodations, and so we
5 don't have access to that. So the -- the
6 issue is trying to find out who those
7 students are, and we wouldn't have access
8 to that information from an applicant pool
9 for our other jurisdictions. We would
10 only be able to have access to the
11 students here in Fairfax County. So it
12 would take some -- it would take some time
13 to be able to dig through it and get that.
14 As a portion, we do deal with some
15 accommodations, but it was certainly -- it
16 was not something that we were able to
17 pull together for this presentation.

18 MS. MEREN: Okay. Thanks for the
19 info.

20 DR. BRABRAND: Ann?

21 DR. BONITATIBUS: Sure. Ms. Meren,
22 would you mind restating your question for
23 me, to make sure that I accurately
24 captured it.

25 MS. MEREN: Sure. I was wondering

1 what your involvement has been in the
2 process of developing the presentation we
3 heard today, and also, how you -- you
4 know, how strongly you feel that this is
5 the best step forward for your school?

6 DR. BONITATIBUS: Thank you. I will
7 say that one of the things that drew me to
8 TJ three years ago and actually, made me
9 seek the position was the -- the notion
10 that the pool could be representative of
11 -- of its region. I read an awful lot
12 about TJ and I was hopeful that perhaps I
13 could be an influencer and a positive
14 force and a unifier in the process.

15 And so most recently, I would say
16 within the past several months as FCPS has
17 been, you know, grappling with issue, as
18 has the state, with all of the directors
19 of governor's school, I have been involved
20 certain conversations. I have been
21 involved with the task force that
22 Secretary Qarni put together, and I
23 appreciated being a part of that.

24 Dr. Brabrand and Mr. Smith, have also
25 reached out to me periodically, over the

1 past several weeks, and have included me
2 in some of the conversations. Feedback, I
3 would say that it's been large
4 representative group of everybody giving
5 feedback. I would say that we are all
6 united in -- in believing that there is a
7 statistically significant enough
8 difference in -- in the disparities that
9 we're seeing, that action does need to be
10 taken. It does need to be taken sooner
11 than later. And I am fully supportive of
12 FCPS efforts to advance the representative
13 demographics at our school.

14 I also feel that our staff is well
15 poised and receptive to welcoming all
16 students regardless of background or
17 circumstance, and helping them be
18 successful. I often say that our students
19 are more than a GPA to us, and we are
20 their GPS and we help them navigate those
21 --those bumps along the road. And
22 sometimes we help them find the speed-pass
23 lane, so they can accelerate.

24 And I'm looking forward, really to --
25 to leading the next generation of TJ

1 regardless of the outcomes of -- of this
2 process. And I feel that we are moving,
3 definitely, in the right direction to
4 expand opportunities. We need to find
5 talent, we need to develop talent, and TJ
6 is the school to do that. And I do not
7 believe that FCPS is going to create
8 processes that diminish our -- our stature
9 as a school because I'm confident in our
10 teacher's amazing ability to work with all
11 students.

12 And I also to make sure that when talk
13 about representative demographics and
14 providing more opportunities to students
15 that we do not approach it with a deficit
16 model, thinking that having a different
17 composition of students at TJ somehow
18 means that -- that those students are not
19 going to contribute to the success of our
20 school. Right now, we have a wonderfully
21 diverse school of all backgrounds, all
22 races, all ethnicities, and all students
23 contribute to the success. Thank you.

24 MS. MEREN: Thank you. Well, I mean,
25 that's pretty resounding support for

1 continuing forward. And you have
2 mentioned that the school is diverse, but
3 at the same time it seems -- you know,
4 it's not to the extent to which you or the
5 division and the community think. So I
6 think it's -- that's -- that's really
7 important for colleagues to hear, that you
8 as the principal support this effort. So
9 thank you very much.

10 DR. BONITATIBUS: Your welcome. Thank
11 you.

12 MS. COHEN: We're going to go ahead
13 and let Ms. Pekarsky go next, and then
14 come back to Ms. Sizemore Heizer.

15 MS. PEKARSKY: Okay. Sure. Thank
16 you. Thank you for this work. Obviously,
17 this is an issue that isn't just an FCPS
18 issue, you know, increasing the diversity.
19 I whole heartedly agree it's necessary. I
20 agree that it's part of overall strong
21 education. By kids go to diverse schools
22 and not by accident and not by mistake but
23 by intentionality. And, you know, having
24 said that, I -- I want to do this work. I
25 want to do this work in a way that is

1 intentional for -- for us to have long
2 lasting positive results. I don't believe
3 in band-aids, I don't believe in -- in
4 fast work, and, you know, I know others
5 would argue that that is not what is
6 happening here.

7 But some of the questions -- you know,
8 the missing data that Ms. McLaughlin
9 brought up, that troubles me. What also
10 troubles me is not knowing what kind of
11 outreach have we done to our families, to
12 survey our families, to -- to get some of
13 the answers -- you know, some we think we
14 know what they are and -- and I think we
15 would all agree, but as to why we don't
16 have the large number of applications for
17 a more diverse student pool. That -- that
18 is an important question to me because it
19 -- it speaks to, how do you fix the
20 problem, or at least part of the problem.
21 And as far as I know, we have not done
22 that. Can somebody speak to that a little
23 bit?

24 DR. BRABRAND: Ms. Pekarsky, thank
25 you. Can you clarify about not having not

1 done what now? Which part.

2 MS. PEKARSKY: So we -- we -- when you
3 look at the application pool, we do not
4 have large numbers of applications from
5 students who are -- are -- you know, large
6 diverse, from Hispanic, so on and so
7 forth. Why. Why Dr. -- I mean, do we
8 have any information surrounding that?

9 DR. BRABRAND: Jeremy, I'm going to
10 let you take a first response if there was
11 previous work on TJ where we were able to
12 find that out. We've seen low levels of
13 applicants for some groups for some time,
14 and we've seen a great decline among some
15 other groups of kids that had previously
16 applied. Jeremy, have we done any work
17 around those trends over the last several
18 years in the TJ work.

19 MR. SHUGHART: So we haven't actually
20 done any type of studies that would reach
21 out and do surveys of why people aren't
22 applying. What you can see, if you -- if
23 you reflect back to the presentation, it
24 was one of the first slides, I think it
25 was Slide 4, would show the overall. That

1 was a 15-year trend. So what we're
2 talking about is going back shortly
3 after-- someone had mentioned previously,
4 the Blue Ribbon Commission. And there
5 were some recommendations that came out of
6 the Blue Ribbon Commissions for us.

7 And so there was a lot of steps that
8 were made to adopt those suggestions in
9 terms of what was going on within the Blue
10 Ribbon Commission. And then as you saw
11 additional changes, specifically with the
12 outreach position, was one of those
13 recommendations coming out of the
14 commission that wasn't implemented until a
15 number of years later. At that point in
16 time, quite honestly, that was the goal,
17 and that was the targeted outreach for our
18 outreach specialist's position was to
19 increase and enhance the -- our minority
20 student applicants with the goal then of
21 increasing the number of students that
22 were ultimately admitted into and provided
23 an offer to TJ.

24 What we found over time was, and as
25 we've evolved the work of the outreach

1 position, was trying to identify those
2 students earlier. And that work has --
3 you know, has transitioned from working
4 with just students in middle school to
5 students also at the elementary levels.
6 Unfortunately, due to budgetary cuts, that
7 was position also cut for us, and so the
8 amount of work that that person was able
9 to -- to contribute at that point in time
10 was greatly reduced, as well.

11 And so we've tried to additional ways
12 to be able to reach out and get students.
13 Currently, most of our targeted work is at
14 our Title 1 schools and our historically
15 unrepresented schools from a -- from a
16 geographic standpoint, which also
17 represents larger portions in some areas
18 of our lack in diversity, as well.

19 And so those were issues and things
20 that I've done, and we've made internal
21 changes to try to address those issues, as
22 well.

23 DR. BRABRAND: Ms. Pekarsky, I'd also
24 say, so, you know, we've done some, we
25 haven't done -- there's more we could do.

1 But I would say this, hearing just, as
2 Ms. Keys-Gamarra mentioned, the voices of
3 students on the tasks force and several of
4 the alumni associations, TJ has -- has
5 developed a reputation. And there is a
6 reputation that is the -- the great side
7 of it, but there's also that underside,
8 and that many more students of color don't
9 feel welcome. Don't feel respected or
10 questioned why they're there. And I -- I
11 believe that that has had an impact on who
12 would even want to apply, let alone go
13 through all the work of trying to be the
14 highest scorer on the admissions test, to
15 then get in that environment.

16 We've also seen a decline, and you can
17 see on that chart, among our white
18 students are choosing not to apply. I
19 don't have as much information granularly
20 on that, and I think that is a
21 conversation with alumni over time. But I
22 did -- I will tell you that we received --
23 I received an alumni letter just recently
24 from a white alumni of many years ago
25 saying, it's not -- it's not set up to be

1 a school for the 21st century with the
2 kind of diversity that he wanted or that
3 he needed to have to kind of success that
4 you need to have in working with people
5 across the globe, across cultures.

6 So I think we can dig into that
7 deeper, but I do think there's already
8 some messaging informally that has gone on
9 that has suppressed applicants based on
10 stories that we have heard.

11 MS. PEKARSKY: So I appreciate that,
12 Dr. Brabrand, and probably so. I cannot
13 disagree with it, but without the
14 outreach, without connecting with these
15 families, cutting the outreach position,
16 you know, that's worrisome to me that
17 we're not doing that level of -- of -- you
18 know, of interaction with our families,
19 because what if there are other, you know,
20 factors to this? What if some feel the --
21 the transportation is an issue. You know,
22 if we move to this model of the regional
23 approach -- I'll take a go-back. Thank
24 you.

25 MS. COHEN: Thank you, Ms. Pekarsky.

1 We have Ms. Sizemore Heizer next.

2 Ms. Sizemore Heizer, we are not getting
3 your audio for some reason. We cannot.
4 Do you want to try to reconnect and we'll
5 -- okay.

6 All right. Ms. Derenak Kaufax, do you
7 mind stepping up to the plate and then
8 we'll get Ms. Sizemore Heizer when she
9 reconnects.

10 MS. DERENAK KAUFAX: Sure. I thank
11 you, Dr. Brabrand, and thank you, Jeremy,
12 for this presentation. I have some
13 comments and then I have some questions.
14 I -- I do want to say that since I began
15 on this board in 2012, we have been
16 committed to do what is best for each and
17 every one of our students, and to help our
18 diverse population reach their fullest
19 potential. We have held numerous work
20 sessions and extensive conversations about
21 TJ over these past eight years, and equity
22 was always at the center and at the core.
23 You saw some staff presentation; we
24 changed the admissions standards five
25 times.

1 Outreach programs have been added, but
2 you have heard that they heard that they
3 have not implemented with fidelity, nor
4 have they been sustained. I don't think
5 it's been a lack of caring or a lack of
6 political will that has gotten here, but
7 the changes in the last ten years, simply
8 have not yielded their results that we
9 wanted.

10 And while I know we continue to try,
11 that's why we're here, looking for our
12 sixth change with equity at the core, but
13 there are strategies and opportunities
14 that I must speak to that have to begin to
15 prepare students particularly in my
16 region. Several of my colleagues have
17 talked about this and these are all
18 pipeline issues and these are root issues
19 at the core. We need universal pre-K, we
20 need outreach, we need to follow the
21 curriculum with advance learning
22 opportunities for all children with
23 fidelity in math and science in all of our
24 regions. We have never committed to that
25 financially, ever, ever, ever.

1 We need advanced academic resource
2 teachers at every school. We still have
3 42 teachers that don't have advance
4 academic resource teachers. All of these
5 good programs can't happen even with good
6 will if we don't have people on the ground
7 -- boots on the ground trying to help our
8 underserved -- or unidentified
9 populations. We have to work -- we have
10 young scholars that was a program
11 developed by a teacher in 2000. It is a
12 great program where it is administered
13 well, but it is not administered either
14 uniformly or with fidelity. And I think
15 we also have to consider other magnet
16 schools to ensure more opportunities.

17 So for me, right now where I am on
18 this, I like the allotment of the regional
19 slots. I like the idea that's been talked
20 about before -- of the idea of inreach, I
21 love that idea. But, like I said, with
22 marginal success.

23 My questions, Dr. Brabrand. Other
24 than GPA, does the questionnaire carry any
25 weight? Are there consultants that we

1 have used most recently? I've talked
2 about a universal screener as a best
3 practice. Have you reached out to them to
4 review your changes to TJ? What is the
5 purpose of us doing this now if the
6 Secretary of Education has announced he is
7 proposing policy changes? Will our
8 changes stand alone or would they be
9 separate from his changes?

10 And put me on a go-back. So if you
11 can answer -- begin to answer my
12 questions, I can repeat them.

13 DR. BRABRAND: Yeah. I'm going to try
14 to take most of them. But as you see, I
15 as writing.

16 You know, I respect the Secretary of
17 Education, and he has -- he has a job to
18 do as the Secretary of Education, and I
19 think I have a job to do as Superintendent
20 of Fairfax County Public Schools. We can
21 -- we can lead or wait to be led. And I
22 prefer to lead and work in partnership
23 with this board to lead in taking the next
24 step on our journey to creating an even
25 better TJ, which you've talked about that

1 this board and prior boards have been a
2 part of doing that journey. It's time to
3 take the next step in the journey.

4 I totally agree with there are other
5 things that we can do and will do around
6 the pipeline, so this is just one part of
7 that multi-pronged approach that we
8 referenced.

9 And I know you asked me another
10 question, and I don't think I answered it
11 in there.

12 MS. DERENAK KAUFAX: There were two
13 more. Other than the GPA, does the
14 questionnaire, does that carry any weight
15 to get into the pool?

16 DR. BRABRAND: Yeah. Jeremy, can you
17 talk a little bit about the questionnaire
18 that we're going to develop and even about
19 our ideas beyond this year? We -- we
20 don't feel the time for this year, but
21 even next year, developing an interview
22 process, but Jeremy, as far as the
23 questionnaire, can you talk about its role
24 and what we propose today.

25 MR. SHUGHART: Sure, Dr. Brabrand.

1 One of the pieces about the questionnaire
2 was really that it -- on some levels it
3 models the student information sheet of
4 previous years, but it's designed -- so
5 all of our previous process was about
6 designing a ranking system. How -- how
7 highly students can perform. And it
8 really was a ranking and sorting in going
9 through that process.

10 But what were looking at here is we're
11 looking for students to be able to meet a
12 -- you know, a set of criteria.
13 Basically, saying we're looking at
14 passion, we're looking at commitment,
15 we're looking -- you know, student match
16 with TJ. Which is a lot of things that
17 we've talked about in the past. We're
18 talking about when we reach out to
19 students and have these conversations with
20 families and students that are looking at
21 TJ as a -- as a high school option, about
22 trying to figure that out. And I think
23 that that goes back to a lot of the
24 elements that we've talked about, why
25 would students want to go to a school that

1 has a STEM focus.

2 And so the questionnaire is a part of
3 looking at this merit within a GPA,
4 particular classes that they're enrolled
5 in terms of Algebra being the -- the --
6 the baseline, and it's about meeting these
7 baselines. So it would play a role and
8 it's -- and one of the things that we're
9 going to look to do this fall is redesign
10 kind of what our former student
11 information sheet was to a new process
12 that includes questionnaire, short answer,
13 maybe essays, and those are some things
14 that we're going to be working on in
15 development.

16 And there would be conversations in
17 terms of consulting with other groups.
18 Perhaps some of those other schools that
19 we have mentioned here and -- and are
20 those experiences that they've used with
21 success.

22 In terms of to respond or add to what
23 Dr. Brabrand was talking about. In the
24 future, there were other options that we
25 were considering for additional components

1 to an application process. But what we
2 also recognized was, you know, the time
3 and the fidelity of implementing it and
4 making sure it was implemented -- you
5 know, really correctly. And so there was
6 a lot of conversation about actual student
7 interviews, and the potential of
8 interviewing students and having that be a
9 part of this process of driving home that
10 idea of that passion and that commitment
11 to learning in this type of an environment
12 and being able to engage with the students
13 in that way.

14 And we wanted to make sure that that
15 was done appropriately, and we didn't feel
16 that within -- within the time frame of
17 what we had to be able to fully evaluate
18 and investigate an application process
19 that had actual interview. It wasn't
20 something that we felt that this was
21 something we looked to implement in this
22 year or in this cycle, but it could be
23 something that was considered into a
24 future year or future cycle.

25 MS. DERENAK KAUFAX: I get that, but I

1 -- I guess, will there be a weighted
2 element to this, or -- or will there be a
3 panel that reviews this questionnaire?
4 Will there be any -- anything -- any kind
5 of panel looking at this? Will this add
6 to a person's ability to get in the pool,
7 I guess, or is 3.5 the main thing?

8 MR. SHUGHART: So the 3.5 would be --
9 would be a minimum, but, yes, there would
10 be panels that would review the -- the
11 questionnaire as well. I would -- I would
12 say that that would be similar to what we
13 currently do in terms of having a panel --
14 evaluators go through and evaluate the
15 current application. So there would some
16 elements of that that we would look at in
17 this -- in this case, as well.

18 MS. DERENAK KAUFAX: Okay.

19 MR. SHUGHART: And I think finally,
20 Tammy, the -- it's not necessarily a
21 weighted, where students that would answer
22 the strongest or have the strongest would
23 have a higher weighting in that. We're
24 looking at removing the barriers and then
25 allowing them to be selected through a

1 lottery process. You know, with like the
2 equality pieces -- or the equity piece
3 here.

4 MS. DERENAK KAUFAX: Okay. And
5 Ms. Cohen, just -- because Dr. Brabrand I
6 think didn't -- because he asked me of the
7 three questions. I guess, Dr. Brabrand, I
8 understand our desire to be leaders and go
9 forward. But do you know status-wise,
10 would the Secretary of Education be
11 allowed to come in say, "Well, this is
12 fine that you did this, but -- but we're
13 still going to" -- because in the last
14 town hall that I listened to, he said, "I
15 will be making policy suggestions and that
16 will be piloting my policies in these two
17 schools." That was the statement he made
18 in a previous town hall that I listened to
19 last Monday.

20 DR. BRABRAND: Yeah. I haven't had
21 that conversation with him. I certainly
22 can and I know many members of the school
23 board have interacted with Secretary
24 Qarni, and so we can have that dialogue.
25 Again, I -- I think personally, as I said,

1 I'd rather have Fairfax solutions for
2 Fairfax students.

3 MS. DERENAK KAUFAX: Yeah. But I
4 think that's really important that we
5 understand whether or not that's going to
6 happen. So I would like an answer to
7 that. And as I said, Ms. Cohen, a
8 go-back, please.

9 DR. BRABRAND: And Ms. Derenak Kaufax,
10 what I would suggest then, if you could
11 give me that specific question and then I
12 will send that to him so I can get a
13 specific answer.

14 MS. DERENAK KAUFAX: Absolutely.

15 DR. BRABRAND: Thanks.

16 MS. COHEN: Next, we have Ms. Sizemore
17 Heizer, and followed by Ms. Omeish.

18 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Is this working,
19 now? Awesome, great.

20 I'm really to follow some of my
21 colleagues. I am a full believer in both
22 the diversity of our applicant pool and
23 diversity of TJ. It is in the workplace,
24 very, very valuable to point of
25 Dr. Brabrand. So I'm excited to see that

1 we're being bold in what we're doing.
2 However, similar to what Ms. Pekarsky
3 said, I want to make sure we're actually
4 addressing the issues, so it has long-term
5 changes. It actually -- it fixes the
6 problem.

7 So I guess what I don't quite
8 understand is how does this lottery system
9 really address the concern about both
10 supporting our students of color at TJ and
11 making sure that we're spotting the talent
12 of our students of color and that they're
13 encouraged to enter.

14 So one of the examples, is if we have
15 70 spots per region, two of the regions --
16 I don't know if it will change anything
17 considering the two are sort of higher
18 feeder schools are in those regions. So
19 how does -- I guess, I don't understand
20 how this is really going to move the
21 needle in the way that we're -- we're
22 seeking to do it.

23 DR. BRABRAND: Well, let my try
24 sharing, and then Jeremy or Ann or anybody
25 else who wants to add in can. We have

1 merit in the pool. We have kids qualify
2 to go to TJ every year. And then what
3 we've done now, for years, is then we
4 administer a test, and the highest score
5 wins. And people with access to test prep
6 will spend -- and Ann has told me,
7 anywhere from \$10 to \$15,000 a year. So
8 this thing -- that is a barrier to lots of
9 kids, economically disadvantaged. You see
10 the difference, when you put that test in,
11 a lot of those kids are screened out.

12 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Absolutely. I
13 understand that, I guess my point is, why
14 are we doing it 70 per region as opposed
15 to a lottery system across the county,
16 perhaps. Because it just seems like it's
17 disadvantaging some the regions we're
18 specifically trying to help that may have
19 -- I don't know it just seems -- it just
20 -- I don't know. I'm wondering why the
21 regional approach for a lottery system.

22 DR. BRABRAND: I mean, we can -- this
23 is what I would say and then Jeremy can
24 answer. One, geographic distribution at
25 TJ -- TJ has been an issue discussed and

1 debated for decades. There's a lot of
2 debate that the school board has said
3 about certain cultures in schools that get
4 created.

5 When you're in a school where every
6 kid gets in, you want to get in, too. And
7 if you're at a school where no kid gets
8 in, why apply? If you can never get
9 drafted for the NFL at your college or the
10 NBA, why would you play the sport? So why
11 would you work extra hard in science and
12 math and apply when no kid year after
13 year, or one or two only get in. I think
14 --

15 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: I guess --

16 DR. BRABRAND: The cultures of
17 schools, there are more qualified kids
18 that can get in TJ, that can get in.

19 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Do you what the
20 applicant -- the diversity applicant pool
21 is -- or diversity geographically, as well
22 as race? Because I think my concern is
23 that if -- are we addressing where the
24 problem really lies? I understand the
25 biases in the test -- in the test preps.

1 So I'm not looking to challenge that --
2 that part of the admissions process. But
3 if the issue is getting to apply who are
4 qualified and should be at TJ or building
5 that pipeline, should would be -- is this
6 the right approach to addressing the
7 solution with the concern.

8 DR. BRABRAND: Right. So, let me tell
9 you a simpler way, if this makes sense.
10 The left side of the graphs I showed you
11 for applicants, we already get some
12 diversity. Much more than what we
13 actually put in the class because we
14 administer the test. So if we change no
15 outreach, we'd actually get more diversity
16 through the merit lottery that already
17 exists in the pipeline. That's part of
18 this whole point. Drop the test and
19 diversity is right in front of us that
20 never gets through the TJ door.

21 Then it's about increasing the
22 pipeline as some other school board
23 members and you have talked about, and
24 making sure that environment in the
25 school, as Ann has talked about, is the

1 welcoming, carrying culture environment
2 for every kid. If you do all three of
3 those, I think you even start to change
4 the number of applicants. But the number
5 of applicants is what we showed you on
6 that left-hand side, the applicants for
7 the pie chart, that's our current --
8 that's our current group and that's the
9 group that would get based on the merit
10 lottery. It just would be done by a
11 lottery instead of test to see who gets
12 the highest score and then you get in.

13 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: I guess the
14 question I have is how do we know that the
15 -- the process to get into the pool is the
16 process -- I mean, that's the process I'd
17 to look at. Is that actually
18 demonstrating the kids that belong at a
19 TJ, and is that diverse -- getting a
20 diverse of kids who belong at a TJ, or
21 want to be a TJ for a variety of reasons.
22 That's the piece I don't hear a lot about,
23 the process of getting into the pool.

24 DR. BRABRAND: Right. So I would put
25 it to you this way, you're talking about

1 reaching Pool 1, what were changing here
2 today is Pool 2. And in Pool 2 we're
3 talking out the test and letting Pool 1
4 stand on its own merit, its own talent.

5 A separate question that you're
6 bringing up now is -- and we talked about
7 it with that targeted outreach. Does the
8 actual removal of the test now change the
9 dynamic about people who have not applied,
10 who will not be willing to apply, either
11 by region, by ethnicity, by economics, by
12 special education? And that the part that
13 really the outreach will tell us. Will
14 changing the way that we've set up TJ to
15 enter, actually change the kind of kid
16 who's willing to apply. And I bet, my own
17 belief, is that applications will soar to
18 TJ because more kids will feel like they
19 actually have a shot to get in, who do the
20 qualifications that we've outlined in that
21 -- in those applications pool
22 requirements.

23 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: We -- at the end
24 -- I guess, I am just concerned to make
25 sure that the purpose of TJ is to provide

1 a gifted education for those interested in
2 STEM and for those who are able to access
3 it and want to access it. And I don't
4 know how this change fulfills that purpose
5 is where I'm confused. You know, I always
6 think there's 10 or 20 percent -- 10
7 percent of the kids who absolutely have to
8 a TJ level and others who are very
9 qualified for it but don't absolutely have
10 to have it. How do we make sure we
11 address both groups? I don't know how
12 else to phrase it.

13 DR. BRABRAND: Yeah. Rachna, I don't
14 have all the answers for that, but I'll
15 say this. We've made a -- we've made a
16 mistake, in my belief, that the highest
17 score on the test means you have the most
18 passion.

19 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Yeah. And
20 that's not the truth, I don't agree with
21 that either. Right.

22 DR. BRABRAND: Right. I don't. And
23 I'll tell you this, too, in this era of a
24 global pandemic I want our top scientists
25 and medical leaders of which TJ will be

1 training. The pandemic is not about
2 scoring highest on a standardized test.
3 We need to be developing and as -- as Ann
4 says, spotting talent and developing it.
5 TJ has got to more about passing a
6 standardized test. And I think we made
7 that disproportionately -- you know, as
8 Tammy talked about the weighting, we've
9 over weighted that.

10 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Absolutely.

11 DR. BRABRAND: It's time to take that
12 weight off the backs of kids, and we could
13 move forward and develop new ways or
14 new --

15 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: That's what I
16 want to find -- that's my concern, right.
17 Absolutely, I understand the issues with
18 the tests, and I don't agree with it. But
19 how do we make sure that what we're
20 putting in place is -- what we want people
21 to do. And that's what -- I don't see
22 that data here.

23 MS. COHEN: Thank you, Ms. -- oh,
24 sorry. Go ahead, Dr. Brabrand.

25 DR. BRABRAND: Yeah. Just to make a

1 final point. That questionnaire, as
2 Jeremy said, we're going to keep the
3 panels, they're going to go through that
4 questionnaire, they're going to work to
5 tease out passion, hope, dreams, and --
6 and my own belief that one of the next
7 bold steps is, we need to have a TJ
8 experience at every high school in Fairfax
9 County Public Schools. Instead of
10 creating this idea that only one place can
11 be a place where dreams can come true for
12 a kid passionate in technology, math,
13 science. We have that in every school.
14 We have high-level courses in every high
15 school, some better than others at
16 creating that pipeline and that's what we
17 need to recommit to doing better, moving
18 forward, and we'll talk about that next
19 month.

20 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Can I have a
21 go-back, please, Ms. Cohen.

22 MS. COHEN: You certainly may. I
23 think it sounds like everybody wants
24 another round. Next, we have Ms. Omeish
25 followed by Mr. Frisch.

1 MS. OMEISH: Thank you. A couple of
2 clarifying questions. So just to clarify.
3 The percent offered chart accounts for the
4 3.5 GPA adjustment, right? So it's only
5 for the pool that would have had a 3.5?

6 DR. BRABRAND: Jeremy -- I'm not sure.
7 Jeremy.

8 MR. SHUGHART: Yeah. Are you
9 referring to the modeling.

10 MS. OMEISH: Yeah.

11 MR. SHUGHART: That's correct. We --
12 we accounted for it at the 3.5, and if --
13 if you'll recall, the numbers were
14 different in terms of the applicant pool
15 at the time in terms of students to get
16 in. So if you're comparing those two,
17 they did have different GPA requirements.

18 MS. OMEISH: Okay. Thank you. And
19 then for the core classes, GPAs it's still
20 -- so it's only seventh grade and then
21 beginning of eighth, right, for the 3.5?

22 MR. SHUGHART: So the -- so the core
23 -- so for core classes you're looking at
24 the end of the year, seventh grade marks
25 for math, science, your history, and

1 English, along with any student that had a
2 world language for high school credit.
3 And then it was first quarter of eighth
4 grade, as well.

5 MS. OMEISH: Okay. When you say, "end
6 of the year," so that's -- yeah, yeah, so
7 the whole of the year. Yeah, yeah, yeah.
8 Okay. Because I remember, you know, one
9 of the things we we're thinking is a more
10 expansive look, I don't know if that's
11 considered, but I appreciate the
12 clarification.

13 Have we considered the merits of
14 teacher recommendation, whether that's a
15 referral or kind of just to check off the
16 box kind of thing? Has there been
17 thinking around pros and cons of something
18 like that?

19 DR. BRABRAND: Jeremy, as I recall, as
20 I shared, we've actually -- we've removed
21 teacher recommendations from the pool, and
22 one of the things that we heard from our
23 AAP study was that those recommendations
24 can be subject to bias. So we -- we've
25 actually removed that and Jeremy, is there

1 anything else to say there.

2 MR. SHUGHART: No, Dr. Brabrand, that
3 was -- that was the discussion because
4 teacher recommendation were a topic of
5 conversation about a piece moving forward.
6 But looking at the other results from the
7 other study was where we kind of fell with
8 why we would remove them from this process
9 as well.

10 MS. OMEISH: Yeah. No, I -- I noticed
11 that in the presentation. I'm thinking
12 not so much writeup, you know, that is as
13 you pointed out very subjective or has
14 that potential. But kind of just an
15 approval to enter a pool or something like
16 that. I'm not saying that's a good idea.
17 I'm -- I'm, you know, wondering if that
18 was thought about, but that's fine.

19 I also wanted to -- another clarifying
20 question. So from the -- the
21 presentation, my understanding of the
22 rolling process was that students would be
23 opted in automatically and they can opt
24 out. But through the discussion, I wasn't
25 so sure, so could someone please clarify

1 that everyone will be considered that
2 meets those criteria?

3 DR. BRABRAND: Jeremy.

4 MR. SHUGHART: Yeah. Sure. So just
5 to clarify, you would still have an
6 applicant pool. So you would have -- so a
7 student would still apply, as long as --
8 and they meet minimum requirements, the
9 3.5, they're in Algebra I, they have to
10 submit or complete the -- the
11 questionnaire/essays. At that -- those
12 student, any of those students that apply,
13 as long as they meet that, they would be
14 put into the lottery pool.

15 Now, if a student doesn't apply, even
16 if they met the minimum criteria, that's
17 not a student that we would consider. But
18 that goes back to what Dr. Brabrand was
19 talking about previously, that goes back
20 to our outreach. That's goes back to that
21 targeted approach where we're looking to
22 try to encourage those students to
23 consider TJ as a high school opportunity
24 for them. And so that's the -- I think
25 that's the distinction. So you would

1 still have an applicant pool, which would
2 not be consistent of everyone that's in
3 Fairfax County Public Schools that meets
4 that requirement.

5 MS. OMEISH: Yeah. I mean, this is
6 one of those areas where I think -- I
7 worry about this. I think there's an
8 alternative that might be conducive to
9 diversity, right. I know this have been
10 one of the -- similar to how in AAP we
11 test everyone. If we're already having
12 outreach problems and we decide that this
13 the model we're going to move forward
14 with, which is the whole topic of
15 conversation, but I would -- my advocacy
16 would to ask, you know, what -- is there
17 anything preventing from being able to
18 have it be an opt out rather than opt in?

19 MR. SHUGHART: Dr. Brabrand, do you
20 want to handle that one?

21 DR. BRABRAND: Part of it -- part --
22 look anything -- anything is up for
23 discussion, but what we have wanted is
24 kids that have an interest. There are a
25 lot of kids with 3.5s that don't have an

1 interest in science and technology.
2 That's just not what they want to do.
3 And, you know, just personally -- well,
4 maybe personal experience, I mean, I had a
5 3.5 or higher in high school, but I really
6 didn't love science and math as my
7 passion, and I wasn't interested. Our --
8 our local school system created, while I
9 was in high school, a technology academy
10 and it just didn't -- it didn't excite me.
11 So we don't to -- we don't want to drag
12 kids into something they don't want to be
13 a part of. So that's really why we
14 refrain. The pool of kids of 3.5s and
15 higher is still going to be larger than
16 applicant pool, but we want kids with
17 those 3.5s and with the interest in having
18 the TJ experience around science
19 technology, engineering, and math.

20 MS. OMEISH: Yeah. Maybe -- maybe the
21 problem I'm trying at doesn't even
22 necessarily need to be solved that way.
23 Maybe it's the idea of informing everyone,
24 "Hey, you're eligible. You know, you're
25 able to apply to this thing." Which can

1 -- can mitigate some of the outreach
2 problem because I'm just worried about,
3 you know, kids have to find out about TJ,
4 and then their parents -- you know, the
5 parents have to know, and then they have
6 to go find how to opt in and you have some
7 of the same outreach issues we're having
8 right now, which are clearly significant.
9 So I would suggest that for consideration.

10 I would also -- I wanted to go back to
11 what Dr. Anderson mentioned earlier about
12 school-based number. I would -- this is
13 another point of advocacy on my part as we
14 move forward with this, that we have --
15 you know, that the proportions are based
16 on schools rather than regions after the
17 equity issues she outlined. So I would
18 love if someone can explain whether
19 there's anything preventing that. Thank
20 you.

21 DR. BRABRAND: We --

22 MS. COHEN: I'm sorry. Would you like
23 a go-back, also.

24 MS. OMEISH: Yeah. Please, thanks.

25 DR. BRABRAND: We can certainly have

1 that conversation. Jeremy or Marty, do
2 you want to talk at all about region
3 versus school?

4 MR. SHUGHART: I -- I don't know if
5 Marty is still on here or not. But -- so
6 region versus school, there was
7 conversations, there was looks at both --
8 both ways. And a lot of this had to do
9 with looking at the overall approach of
10 what we are trying to do when we're a
11 school -- when we're a school that
12 actually supports multiple school
13 divisions. And so we wanted to stay
14 consistent throughout the entire approach,
15 which would have looked at a couple of
16 other school divisions, as well.

17 So if you take some of the larger
18 participating school divisions, such as
19 Loudoun or Prince William, and apply that
20 same school level approach to them, we
21 didn't want to look at that, we didn't
22 want to go to that level with them as
23 well.

24 In addition, it was also -- there was
25 some questions, I think, someone had

1 mentioned earlier about just an overall
2 lottery approach just for Fairfax County.
3 And what we -- what we also recognize was
4 that there's a geographic element here
5 that we've been lacking historically. And
6 we wanted to assure that there were
7 students that were coming from the
8 different areas. And remember we're
9 talking about the base schools. We're
10 looking at this from a base-school
11 approach. What is the school in which the
12 student would naturally be attending? And
13 ensure that there is some -- there is
14 regional representation to give us that
15 geographic distribution within Fairfax
16 County, that has lacked in previous years.

17 And so that was the part of the reason
18 was, it was a step in that direction to
19 ensure that we had regional -- or
20 geographic representation across Fairfax
21 County at TJ through this approach. And
22 that was the reason why we went with a
23 regional approach as to boiling it down to
24 an individual school approach. And it
25 just -- and it was -- it was appropriate

1 because it allowed us to provide kind of a
2 -- an intermediate step there from going
3 from an entire county approach to an
4 individual school approach.

5 MS. OMEISH: Thank you.

6 MS. COHEN: Thank you. Next, we have
7 Mr. Frisch.

8 MR. FRISCH: Thank you. Can we just
9 say it's not a pipeline issue and it's not
10 a testing issue; it's both, and it's way
11 more than that. It's a problem with the
12 message that we send our kids, our
13 underrepresented students, and the culture
14 that we allow in the system. I've
15 received -- I can't even count the number
16 of e-mails that I've received from parents
17 telling me that real reason we have an
18 underrepresentation is because black and
19 brown families don't care, or they're
20 culturally disinclined from pursuing STEM.

21 That's the sort of bigotry pointed at
22 members of our own community is why we are
23 here in the year 2020 asking for data
24 about access to AAP and STEM and other
25 opportunities and for generations why they

1 haven't had access to these opportunities
2 and why they've been denied the same
3 dreams that everybody else has.

4 At some point, some school board is
5 going to have to stand up and say, "Enough
6 is enough." You know, if a growing number
7 of elite universities can acknowledge that
8 a test is not a suitable measurement of
9 merit, then Fairfax County Public Schools
10 can do the same thing.

11 That's not to say that I don't have
12 some concerns, I do have concerns about
13 the regional approach here, similar to
14 Dr. Anderson's. You know, I wonder -- I
15 worry whether we will further disadvantage
16 some middle schools that are already
17 underrepresented. I'm also concerned that
18 some families may move to a different
19 region to -- you know, in hopes that
20 they'll have an easier shot at gaining
21 admission, although, I don't know how you
22 would mitigate something like that.

23 And, you know, I also -- you know, to
24 a broader point, how are we connecting
25 with the qualified students. I think, in

1 the implementation of any plan going
2 forward, we need a concrete plan for how
3 we are going to directly engage the
4 families of qualified students because
5 they don't think we're doing enough.

6 Finally, I also bring up, you know,
7 these slides that we've been presented
8 with, which show remarkable growth if we
9 implement a merit lottery, still only show
10 a tiny percentage of what the actual
11 school population is. So this
12 conversation is not over when we make this
13 movement, or else some future school board
14 will be sitting in a future school board
15 meeting with a list of all the things that
16 other school boards have done in the past
17 to make it better, and only saw the needle
18 -- the needle move only so much. So I'm
19 heartened that we're having this
20 conversation now. It's long overdue, and
21 we cannot delay having this conversation
22 and moving forward. We need certainly to
23 answer some questions and we can that with
24 our next steps. Thanks.

25 MS. COHEN: Thank you, Mr. Frisch.

1 Did you want any response from
2 Dr. Brabrand and crew?

3 MR. FRISCH: Sure. I mean, I'd love
4 to hear a commitment to a more robust plan
5 for outreach to families of qualified
6 students. It's one of the things that we
7 raise in our meeting -- managers meeting.

8 DR. BRABRAND: Yeah. Mr. Smith, did
9 you want to share something on that?

10 MR. SMITH: Oh, no. I -- I was going
11 to simply say that Mr. Frisch is right on
12 target, and we talked about ensuring that
13 we have a more robust process for reaching
14 out to families, reaching out to students
15 who are eligible to apply, working with
16 our counselors, working with our teachers
17 and administrators, so that we can help
18 them have those conversations -- continue
19 to have those conversations with families.

20 But helping those families who didn't
21 ever see TJ as opportunity, we want them
22 to see TJ as an opportunity, and we want
23 them to be part of that application
24 process.

25 MS. COHEN: Thank you.

1 MR. FRISCH: Are you talking about
2 families moving to different regions to
3 try to get into the system, or -- or I'm
4 assuming that you all thought of that when
5 coming when with this plan. Did you throw
6 out any ideas to mitigate the issue, or is
7 it just something that can't be addressed?

8 MR. SMITH: Those are things that I
9 think we have little ability to control.
10 We know that there are ways that people
11 will try to find advantage with -- well,
12 any aspect of our admissions process. And
13 so, you know, I think it's really more
14 about how we can be proactive in working
15 with our administrators, working with our
16 counselors and teachers, and working
17 directly with those students and families
18 to help them understand that TJ is an
19 option. The more students we have in the
20 application pool, the more we begin to see
21 that the talent in Fairfax County is
22 reflected at TJ.

23 MR. FRISCH: All right. Thank you.

24 MS. COHEN: Thank you. You know, I
25 would just like to point out that we have

1 30 percent of kids are economically
2 disadvantaged. Almost 30 percent of our
3 kids don't speak English as their first
4 language. And when we look at that they
5 roughly make up about 1 percent of the
6 kids who even make the cutoff, ultimately,
7 for TJ, and to me the message becomes if
8 you're poor, if English is not your native
9 language, if you're black, if you're
10 Latino, this is not the school for you.
11 And we cannot have spent the last few
12 hours talking about bias and hate in our
13 curriculum without recognizing that there
14 are structures in our system that
15 perpetuate the same kinds of issues that
16 we are talking about working to fix in the
17 rest of our system.

18 COVID gives us an opportunity to try
19 something new. It gives us an opportunity
20 to not ask kids to come back into
21 buildings and then only have kids willing
22 to take a test whose parents are willing
23 to have them take that risk or who don't
24 have pre-existing conditions.

25 What we're saying is we have an

1 opportunity to do something different this
2 year, and this is not likely to be
3 forever. Look, we're all quite open that
4 in nine years, six times we've tried
5 something different and it hasn't worked.

6 So I don't know that there is a
7 forever. But we know we have an
8 application process that's a problem, and
9 we know we have an attendance issue that
10 is a problem. Is it chicken or egg? I
11 don't know the answer to that, but I know
12 that our kids often don't see themselves
13 as belonging. And to be honest, many have
14 reached to tell me that once they get
15 there, they certainly don't feel like they
16 belong.

17 So this is a systemic problem that can
18 only have a holistic fix. So that means
19 budget priorities that talk about
20 pipelines at schools. It means AARTs. It
21 means looking at the whole problem and it
22 also means the kind of support that kids
23 need when they get there. And that will
24 take investment. It will take change to
25 even start that to happen.

1 So I -- I worry -- I worry about some
2 of the things. I worry, I want us to make
3 sure that we have kids who really are able
4 to handle the kind of rigor in math. I
5 think we need to have conversations about
6 how we make sure that every middle school
7 and elementary school in our county is
8 getting them that opportunity. And one is
9 not going to fix the other. It has to be
10 together.

11 You know, I also want -- when we talk
12 about panels and with the new student
13 information sheet, we have to make sure
14 those panels are trained in cultural
15 competency and that we're not hitting some
16 of the same pitfalls that we have in any
17 other process.

18 So I know have several -- thank you.
19 I don't expect an answer to that, unless
20 you'd like to comment on it.

21 I'm going to take that as a no.

22 I guess the one question I do have is,
23 Dr. Brabrand, can we expect that we're
24 going to see budget priorities to help fix
25 the pipeline at the same time?

1 DR. BRABRAND: Well, Ms. Cohen, thank
2 you, and of course, you know budget
3 remains a topic of extraordinary interest
4 and fluidity right now with COVID-19. I
5 do think as we're doing the budget for
6 this coming year, we've to prioritize
7 equity at the center of our budget
8 deliberations, and so I think anything
9 around supporting this pipeline and
10 supporting the TJ admissions has to get
11 risen to the top. So I currently want it
12 to be, and we may need to look at
13 reallocating as we do the program budget
14 review with you all here. Things that
15 we've put investments in in the past and
16 reallocate those to investments we want to
17 make for the future including for TJ and
18 the pipeline.

19 MS. COHEN: Thank you. Colleagues, I
20 am wondering, we've been going, I know,
21 nonstop and so has staff. Almost every
22 member has a go-back. I wondered if
23 everybody would like a two-minute break to
24 run and grab, use restroom, whatever, and
25 let's -- it's 6:20, get to go backs and

1 I'd like those to be limited to 90
2 seconds, please.

3 Yes, Dr. Brabrand.

4 DR. BRABRAND: Is five minutes
5 possible just for some of our staff
6 members to -- to walk and just some --

7 MS. COHEN: So we don't all get blood
8 clots, yes, 6:23, we'll see everybody back
9 here.

10 DR. BRABRAND: Thank you.

11 (Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

12 MS. COHEN: All right. Friends, we're
13 in the homestretch, I hope. I will do a
14 quick -- just to check to make sure we've
15 got everybody back. But we'll do a minute
16 and a half, but I would absolutely love it
17 if you feel like you do not need to use
18 all of your time, it would be great if
19 stick to a minute. I know I'm trying to
20 be respectful of all our times and -- and
21 supertime coming up quick.

22 So real quick check in with everybody
23 back from break. Dr. Anderson.

24 DR. ANDERSON: Present.

25 MS. COHEN: Ms. Corbett Sanders?

1 MS. CORBETT SANDERS: I'm here, just
2 not quick with unmute.

3 MS. COHEN: Ms. Tholen? We'll come
4 back to Ms. Tholen. Ms. Sizemore Heizer?

5 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: I'm here.

6 MS. COHEN: Ms. Omeish.

7 MS. OMEISH: Here.

8 MS. COHEN: Ms. Keys-Gamarra?

9 MS. KEYS-GAMARRA: Here.

10 MS. COHEN: Mr. Frisch?

11 MR. FRISCH: Here.

12 MS. COHEN: Ms. McLaughlin?

13 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Here.

14 MS. COHEN: Ms. Meren?

15 MS. MEREN: Very much still here.

16 MS. COHEN: Ms. Pekarsky?

17 MS. PEKARSKY: I'm here.

18 MS. COHEN: Ms. Derenak Kaufax?

19 MS. DERENAK KAUFAX: Here.

20 MS. COHEN: And then let's Ms. Tholen
21 one time and we'll go ahead and get
22 started.

23 MS. THOLEN: I'm here.

24 MS. COHEN: Thank you all so much, and
25 thanks for being so prompt. All right.

1 Wo with go-backs, I've written down the
2 order that I had, if anybody has objection
3 to me missing somebody out of turn, please
4 let me know. But I have Dr. Anderson
5 starting with our first go-back, in a
6 minute and a half, please.

7 DR. ANDERSON: Okay. Thank you. I
8 will be short and sweet. I am in favor of
9 this approach because while we know it's
10 not the only thing we have to do, we have
11 a pipeline issue, we have an admission --
12 admissions issue. We have a culture
13 issue. It does not stand to reason to me
14 for us to not do anything at all at this
15 point.

16 So starting here, it's as good as
17 definitely is insufficient. We have to do
18 more. So I am very much in favor of us
19 moving forward, and yes, the timeline may
20 be -- may seem aggressive, but it's
21 overdue. This is urgent. We have --
22 we've been behind this ball for a very,
23 very long time.

24 The only thing that I want to be sure
25 that I clarify, I do not want for this

1 regional approach to eclipse some of my
2 schools. It is heartbreaking that TJ sits
3 in Mason District and Mason District
4 students don't see that as an opportunity.

5 So I'm going to stop there because I
6 think much has been said to help support
7 why this is not something we need to not
8 engage in immediately if not sooner.
9 Thank you.

10 MS. COHEN: Thank you, Dr. Anderson.
11 Next, I have Ms. McLaughlin was actually
12 in the queue second.

13 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Can you hear me.

14 MS. COHEN: Yes, ma'am. I sure can.

15 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Okay. So the
16 quickest points I can make are, Number 1,
17 Dr. Brabrand, universities that do
18 selective admissions without tests, the do
19 look at the rigor of the curriculum
20 students have taken to ensure they're
21 prepared properly. So you need to come
22 back with us about what that 3.5 is. Are
23 you going to also put in there the course
24 review because a 3.5 across standard level
25 courses is not going to necessarily set

1 students up for success? And once they
2 get to TJ it will be so rigorous, they are
3 going to be with students who were at the
4 AAP centers, who have taken all honors
5 courses at the middle school level.

6 So I think you need to add more meat
7 on the bone to your approach that's not
8 test -- if you're taking the test portion
9 out, you've got bring more of that to the
10 table. And I would like to know what
11 these other schools have done in that
12 regard to the rigor of the courses that
13 have been taken.

14 The second thing is, that I still --
15 I'm probably most comforted by what
16 Ms. Cohen, that in this COVID year, we can
17 certainly try to see what happens when we
18 get rid of the test, but I -- I will
19 caution that rushing to this without
20 making sure that we've a process that
21 allows students to be successful, has me
22 concerned.

23 And secondly, the regional slots, 70
24 per based when the regions weren't set up
25 that way, Ms. Sizemore Heizer said what I

1 think, you need to look at maybe doing a
2 county wide lottery for this year then. I
3 have grave concerns. Thank you.

4 MS. COHEN: Thank you, Ms. McLaughlin.
5 Ms. Keys-Gamarra?

6 MS. KEYS-GAMARRA: Can you guys hear
7 me now, I'm sorry. Okay. I -- I am going
8 to have to support this, and I know that
9 it's not perfect, but I don't think in the
10 year of COVID that we can just do what
11 we've been doing. I -- I don't even think
12 it's practical.

13 So the other thing is, I want to hear
14 a report on what our outreach will be
15 because I don't want our efforts to be
16 counterproductive. I also want to hear
17 more about the specifics because we did
18 not have an opportunity to review these
19 documents. We were all in meeting when
20 they were finally released.

21 The board does need to participate in
22 the process with as much public engagement
23 as we can possibly squeeze in. Let's face
24 it, the board is going to be held
25 accountable regarding this decision.

1 I also would say, that once we
2 identify students that are accepted, we
3 may want to offer some online support for
4 them during the summer because we do have
5 that concern about what is available at
6 some schools and not other. And hat may
7 be something that we can pull together in
8 the virtual -- some type of virtual
9 support.

10 But my final thing would be to please,
11 please let's have this additional
12 conversation. Let's -- you know, we need
13 to look at the full spectrum of
14 information that is available.

15 MS. COHEN: Thank you,
16 Ms. Keys-Gamarra. Next, on my list, I
17 have Ms. Tholen.

18 MS. THOLEN: Sorry. I was thinking
19 someone was before me. Okay. I'm just
20 going to give a litany of questions in 90
21 seconds.

22 We've had so many advance -- we're
23 fortunate to have so many advanced and
24 passionate students in Fairfax County
25 across the board, and we -- you know, how

1 do we treat all of them with the respect
2 that they deserve?

3 I understand we need to make a change;
4 I understand that that the pandemic will
5 make the testing difficult. But how do we
6 make sure that the students that really
7 need the experience get there. You know,
8 there's some percentage of students in
9 that high school that just really made --

10 I was happy to hear more about the
11 revised student information sheet and
12 going back in time. But I'm wondering why
13 the problem-solving essay was removed, and
14 I think that might give us more
15 information about these students.

16 Have we considered the capacity and
17 programmatic issues that we will have at
18 our base high schools? You know, when we
19 look at this regional perspective, and,
20 you know, things are shifting around.
21 We're going to need to offer additional
22 science courses at our based high schools.
23 You know, these students are not going to
24 be getting into TJ. What are we going to
25 do for students that are not getting in.

1 The big picture, we've got all these
2 amazing students, why don't we get busy
3 and buckle down and start another program?
4 Why are we turning talent away from
5 programs like this? Let's build on our
6 Edison Global Engineering Program.

7 -- and policy. Let's --

8 MS. COHEN: Thank you, Ms. Tholen.
9 Would anyone like to respond? Ms. Tholen
10 did ask specifically about removal of
11 that -- that essay piece.

12 Mr. Smith, did you want to speak to
13 that?

14 MR. SMITH: Oh, well, I wasn't going
15 to speak to the essay piece, and I have to
16 apologize, I had leave for another meeting
17 and now I'm back and so if this was
18 discussed, now I apologize.

19 But I know that there was some
20 discussion about what do we do for those
21 students who need a particular type of
22 educational experience. And I know that
23 we could, you know, possibly use our
24 virtual learning experience to provide
25 opportunities for student to either take

1 course work or take additional classes at
2 TJ. When I was in school, they called it
3 auditing, of course it wouldn't be
4 auditing, you'd actually be part of the
5 class. But those are things that we can
6 certainly take a look at.

7 I know that with regard to the
8 problem-solving essay, it's actually
9 Mr. Shughart and I worked very closely
10 with our colleagues from all of our
11 receiving schools and Ms. Corbett Sanders
12 was actually the president of APAC at the
13 time, and we had conversations with folks
14 about that particular essay and how we
15 might change that. We could certainly
16 take a look at some type of
17 problem-solving piece as part of the
18 student information sheet to add a bit
19 more variance to that. So those are
20 things that we could certainly take a look
21 at.

22 MS. COHEN: Thank you, Mr. Smith. And
23 I apologize, but I inadvertently skipped
24 Ms. Corbett Sanders, so you are on deck.

25 MS. CORBETT SANDERS: Thank you.

1 MR. FRISCH: I think she means you're
2 up next.

3 MS. CORBETT SANDERS: I understand.
4 So as the school board representative of a
5 region of the county that has been
6 historically underrepresented, to the
7 point that kids don't even bother applying
8 anymore. Many of them don't. I
9 absolutely think that we have to do
10 something new, and we have to do something
11 that ensures that we have a holistic
12 merit-based approach that creates
13 opportunities and access for every child
14 who needs to take advantage of a school
15 like TJ and is not an environment in which
16 we are actually disincenting kids so much
17 so that they don't even bother applying.

18 So I like what we've talked about
19 today. I do think that I feel much more
20 comfortable with many of the suggestions
21 in our conversation about the importance
22 of -- of that separate sheet -- the
23 student sheet. I do think that we need to
24 have clarity on that statement from
25 students and an example of problem-solving

1 capabilities that is not test prep
2 oriented.

3 I do think that we need to look at our
4 panel discussions. And so from my
5 perspective, what I would like to see is
6 that when the -- the superintendent comes
7 back to us on October 8th, he provides
8 clarity as to how he's going to
9 incorporate all of these pieces in the
10 approach to be taken this year because
11 they've all been supported by what Jeremy
12 has said throughout this conversation.

13 MR. SMITH: We will pull that
14 together.

15 MS. CORBETT SANDERS: Fantastic.
16 Thank you.

17 MS. COHEN: Next, on my list I have
18 Ms. Meren, and I'm not a hundred percent
19 if she wanted a go-back or not, so...

20 MS. MEREN: Actually, I did not want a
21 go-back. I'm fine, thank you.

22 MS. COHEN: Thank you so much. I have
23 Ms. Sizemore Heizer then, next.

24 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Great. Thank
25 you. Thank you.

1 First, I wanted to say I very much do
2 support getting rid of the testing piece
3 of the step from the pool to the
4 semifinalist because I -- for all the
5 reasons that were mentioned earlier.

6 But I do think there's a huge pipeline
7 issue, now I wish we had more information
8 here on what to address with that. You
9 know, I think Mr. Frisch brought up the
10 e-mail from students who say they don't
11 them -- there's a cultural bias against
12 those who kind of get encouraged to go to
13 TJ, as well as those who are at TJ. And
14 I -- I personally sound like from all the
15 e-mails I've gotten, a huge part of the
16 problem and I would like to see more on
17 how do we address that supportive culture
18 at TJ, as well as the outreach, high level
19 math, cultural bias, all those pieces in
20 building the pipeline to students at TJ.

21 The second is, have we looked a
22 two-pronged approach to some of this. I
23 think Mr. Smith mentioned conversations
24 around those students who really need to
25 be a TJ versus those students are very

1 capable of TJ, want that extra -- that
2 STEM enrichment, and want to be at TJ.
3 But there are some -- and the Council for
4 Exceptional Children even talk about the
5 behavioral concerns and I think Ann
6 brought it up as well, of students who
7 need that enrichment and don't get it.
8 And have we looked at ways to ensure that
9 we -- we include that group to get it.

10 And then I'm really, on Dr. Brabrand's
11 point about intentionally including higher
12 level classes at base schools. I will
13 tell you, as a parent, I personally saw
14 that. I really think we need to look at
15 STEM education across, and also other
16 magnet programs so TJ isn't -- so those
17 are my follow-ups.

18 MS. COHEN: Thank you. Did anybody
19 want to comment on that, the idea
20 Ms. Sizemore Heizer was suggesting, a
21 two-pronged approached?

22 DR. BRABRAND: The two-pronged
23 approach you were talking about,
24 the -- the increasing the pipeline and the
25 access of these courses at the base

1 schools.

2 Do you want to know whether we can
3 bring an update around that at the next
4 meeting; is that your point?

5 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: May I clarify,
6 Ms. Cohen?

7 MS. COHEN: Yes, you may.

8 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: So,
9 Dr. Brabrand, a two-pronged approach is,
10 you know, we're looking at a lottery
11 system, but there's -- there's, you know,
12 again, the research shows some kids who
13 really operate at this level that they
14 need a magnet program or enrichment like
15 TJ. And many, many other kids including
16 the ones we're missing, our diverse
17 students, who would benefit from a TJ and
18 want to be at TJ versus those who need to
19 need to be at a TJ. Mr. Smith even
20 mentioned those conversations. I'm just
21 wondering if there's a two-pronged
22 approach so we get the kids who -- the
23 small, small percentage, I believe, who
24 need to be there and have a pathway that
25 ensures a better diversity of students who

1 do want to and should be at TJ and are
2 able to be at a TJ.

3 DR. BRABRAND: You know, I'd have
4 to -- I'd have to go back to the team and
5 think that through. I don't know whether
6 that's something -- I -- I'd have to back
7 and think that through with the team, to
8 be honest. It's certainly a -- an
9 interesting suggestion, but I don't have
10 the answer at this time.

11 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Is there
12 a -- sorry, Mr. Smith.

13 MR. SMITH: And I did just want to
14 clarify, when I was talking about those
15 students who need to be there, I'm also
16 talking about those students who have
17 historically been underrepresented and
18 need to be there as well. So I wanted to
19 clarify that piece.

20 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Oh, absolutely.

21 MR. SMITH: And I think -- and I think
22 that there are opportunities for us as
23 there are students who currently apply for
24 TJ and aren't accepted at TJ. We
25 certainly need to differentiate for those

1 students at their base schools and so we
2 would want to ensure that we continue that
3 type of differentiation of their base
4 school, working very closely with their
5 families to independently program for
6 those students. So I think that there are
7 opportunities and that goes to some of the
8 opportunities I shared before about, you
9 know, even the -- the ability to use
10 virtual learning to actually access
11 classes or courses at TJ.

12 So we'll certainly be working with our
13 principals and our counselors to -- to
14 make sure that we meet the needs of all of
15 our students. And for those students who
16 need enrichment across the board or need
17 individualized enrichment, we can provide
18 those supports for them.

19 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Thank you.

20 MS. COHEN: Thank you, Ms. Sizemore
21 Heizer.

22 Next, we have Ms. Derenak Kaufax. Did
23 you want a go-back?

24 MS. DERENAK KAUFAX: Yes, ma'am. So
25 one -- oh, there we go -- one of my

1 colleagues, I can't remember who, talked
2 about there'll be boards in the future
3 that have -- will be talking about this if
4 we don't do something. Well, I do want to
5 mention that we have done something six
6 different times, as I stated. But what we
7 haven't done, is we haven't addressed the
8 roots of the problem. We have not
9 committed funds and -- and we are
10 collectively culpable. The State of
11 Virginia hasn't done universal pre-K, we
12 have not been funded properly, we have not
13 been able to do our front-loading young
14 scholars or advance academic resources.

15 I was quote in the Washingtonian
16 Magazine twice over the last ten years
17 because we have been fighting for this
18 equity issue with no good results. So,
19 again, as colleagues have expressed, I
20 will support this.

21 But Dr. Brabrand, a couple things, you
22 said TJ does not represent all the talent
23 we have in Fairfax and I think this
24 statement begs the question for other
25 high-performing magnet schools here and in

1 order to do that we must have funding, we
2 must have support from state local
3 officials, and finally we have to be
4 committed to all of these things we have
5 been fighting for for over ten years. And
6 we have to commit budget dollar to that,
7 and we have to be serious about it because
8 there will be -- this is one of
9 Washingtonian magazines.

10 I do want to say this, this should not
11 be the cover of Washingtonian magazine.
12 Why you should hate this school and it's
13 about Thomas Jefferson High School. And
14 some people -- it is a school where people
15 need to feel embraced, cared after, and it
16 is a school that started out with all the
17 right purposes but we have not been able
18 to figure out how to get things back on
19 track.

20 So while I'm going to say --

21 MS. COHEN: Thank --

22 MS. DERENAK KAUFAX: One more, I'm
23 sorry. I am not a hundred percent this is
24 the right option, I'm going to vote for
25 it, but those other things have to be

1 fixed. Thank you for letting me go over.

2 MS. COHEN: Thank you, Ms. Derenak
3 Kaufax. Next up, we have Ms. Pekarsky.

4 MS. PEKARSKY: Thank you. I'm not
5 really sure I can follow that because it
6 encapsulates exactly how I'm feeling.
7 It's not lack of urgency; it's actually
8 investing in the ways that will fix the
9 core of the problem. And that -- I mean,
10 we have to, we have to have to now.

11 What I worry with this lottery system,
12 what we don't want to do is leave it up to
13 chance that those kids who are truly
14 highly exceptional will not get in because
15 that will be a travesty. And I know there
16 are kids that are not getting in. But I
17 -- I just -- I am trying to figure out how
18 that will solve this. I am trying very
19 hard. I have an open mind. I want to
20 engage my constituents. I want to engage
21 our stakeholders. I want to talk about
22 this again. I still think there is so
23 much left to say.

24 You know, I agree with what
25 Ms. Corbett Sanders said about the

1 critical thinking piece of this. It just
2 -- it really worries me when I think that
3 a student like me, could have met that GPA
4 very easily in high school, and I did not
5 belong in TJ, that was not where I supposed
6 to be. So I -- I just want to make sure
7 that we are capturing all of those kids.
8 Thanks.

9 MR. SMITH: And I -- I will add that
10 as we talk about our outreach efforts,
11 it's really some things that -- that we
12 talk about quite a bit. It's about
13 building those relationships with students
14 and understanding what our students'
15 desires are, and so it is very important
16 that we identify students who want to
17 apply, who have a strong love and a strong
18 desire for science, technology,
19 engineering, a STEM and STEAM. And so we
20 certainly would want to make sure that we
21 get those students who would see TJ as an
22 option for them.

23 I'm with you Ms. Pekarsky, I would
24 have made those requirements, but I don't
25 if I would have necessarily been a student

1 who would have thrived at TJ. So we want
2 to make sure that we're identifying
3 students who have the requisite criteria
4 met and who also have that love and have
5 that spark for the opportunities that we
6 could provide at TJ.

7 MS. COHEN: Thank you. Ms. Omeish,
8 you wanted a go-back.

9 MS. OMEISH: Yes. Thank you. Okay.
10 So I have a couple of questions first.
11 The -- to address Ms. McLaughlin's
12 concern, is the 3.5 weighted or unweighted
13 that we're considering?

14 MR. SHUGHART: This is Mr. Shughart,
15 that was an unweighted GPA.

16 MS. OMEISH: Okay. She raises a
17 worthwhile point, so I think that's
18 something to think about. The second
19 question, is the only way to enter the
20 pool GPA, from what I'm understand now, is
21 yes. And was there consideration given,
22 maybe, to additional paths towards it to
23 Ms. Pekarsky's point about talent and
24 recruiting talent?

25 MS. COHEN: Mr. Shughart or Mr. Smith?

1 MR. SMITH: Oh, I'm sorry. I think
2 we're talking about the application pool
3 or the lottery pool? I need some
4 clarification because the application --

5 MS. OMEISH: The lottery pool.

6 MR. SMITH: -- the application pool is
7 a 3.5. The lottery pool is all that
8 information plus the essay and/or student
9 information sheet process. And so
10 whatever that looks like and how we create
11 the questions that students would answer
12 so that we could get at that desire for
13 STEM, the opportunities that they've had,
14 the experiences that they've had. That's
15 the piece that would take them into the
16 lottery pool.

17 MS. OMEISH: Right, so in that initial
18 vetting, if a student has a 3.4 and all
19 their teachers are recommending they get
20 in, right, that's not a path -- there's no
21 path for that student, right?

22 I'm wondering if alternatives were
23 considered on this? I just want to gain a
24 better understanding of the -- of the
25 thinking there.

1 MR. SHUGHART: So there was
2 conversations, but in terms of what you're
3 talking about as -- as a student that has
4 a 3.4, that student wouldn't have been
5 eligible for this year. They certainly
6 would have been eligible to be able to
7 apply in the future.

8 The comparison would have been to
9 students currently that would have a 2.9
10 would not be eligible to apply this year
11 or in previous years when a 3.0 was the
12 minimum requirements. So it's about that
13 baseline and removing the tests and
14 looking at some merits in terms of this.
15 There was great discussion about where --
16 where that gets put and ultimately where
17 we settled on that to move forward was at
18 the 3.5 as opposed to a 3.0 or a 3.25 or
19 even on the end, a 3.75 or perhaps even a
20 4.0. It was trying to make sure that we
21 found a -- you know, a place there that we
22 were comfortable with moving forward.

23 MS. OMEISH: Okay. Yeah, I mean, I
24 think it would be worthwhile to think
25 about additional paths that don't involve

1 the testing component, which I think we
2 were removing for the bias piece, but just
3 something to think about.

4 And then I'm curious what's the
5 planned priority for the TJ office now
6 that the process will be different? Will
7 that be recruitment, advertising, that
8 kind of thing?

9 MR. SHUGHART: So -- so in terms of
10 the focus, it -- it shifts the -- the
11 timing of what we do. So if we move
12 forward with this and the application
13 begins in a winter time frame, say a
14 December/January time frame, instead of
15 having students applying in September, we
16 shift that to a wintertime, which allows
17 for more recruitment. So it goes back to
18 some of the previous questions that people
19 were talking about, is that outreach.

20 We -- and I think there's -- there
21 perhaps is a misunderstanding to the
22 amount of outreach that we currently do.
23 Our office is a very small office. We're
24 two and a half staff members in our office
25 that does the outreach that we currently

1 conduct. And what we do during the
2 current application window, or previous
3 years, I should say, and use those as the
4 example, is we we're out in presenting a
5 lot of different information, having many
6 different evening and daytime
7 presentations to students and families.
8 And what this would provide us -- you
9 know, in a year in which we're not
10 developing it as we're moving forward,
11 would allow for very targeted approaches.

12 I think someone mentioned young
13 scholars as a -- as a group that has that
14 conversation. That actually is one of the
15 targeted groups that we currently are
16 engaged with, and -- and perform and
17 provide information to and try to
18 encourage to go through this process. And
19 what I would envision moving forward is
20 that that information and that outreach
21 not only is reaching all those students.
22 So we're inviting students to apply to TJ
23 that meet these criterias in terms of
24 grades and -- and math classes and
25 whatever, here in Fairfax County, but we

1 can also share that with our participating
2 jurisdictions and be able to get that
3 information into their hands as well.

4 But we can then add to that, so a lot
5 of the conversation we've heard today is
6 that targeted approach and that thoughtful
7 approach, and I think those are the pieces
8 that we really want to be drive home so
9 that it provides us with the time.
10 Traditionally, having an early September
11 or early fall application window provides
12 us with a very limited amount of time to
13 get those students when they're in eighth
14 grade. So our approaches are trying to
15 get students in younger grades before they
16 even reach eighth grade. And so this
17 would allow us to have more time
18 specifically with those students in eighth
19 grade to encouragement and to try to drive
20 up those applicants.

21 And like Dr. Brabrand said earlier, I
22 truly believe in a movement in this
23 approach will encourage and increase the
24 number of applicants in our process. I
25 really believe that that's what will

1 happen because that's what -- you know, is
2 our -- is our -- it's a drive for us to
3 actually encourage students to go forward.

4 So, sorry, if that was a little, you
5 know, long-winded, but that's kind of what
6 the approach is, you know, moving forward.

7 MS. OMEISH: Thank you. There's more
8 to say, but my time --

9 MS. COHEN: Thank you, Ms. Omeish.
10 Just a couple of questions that I had
11 left. Was there anyone else who wanted --
12 I missed with a go-back, I'm sorry, before
13 I speak. Seeing no hands, I just have a
14 couple of quick questions.

15 One, I just wanted to flag that for
16 the community that we are just -- the
17 proposal is to increase the number of
18 students. So Mr. Shughart will you speak
19 to how many students we wound up having
20 enrolled this versus how many we would
21 accept next year under this plan.

22 MR. SHUGHART: So the difference in
23 terms of enrolling and -- and what we do.
24 So current process is we're offering
25 students approximately between 480 and 500

1 students. So this year we offer 486
2 students to attend TJ. That also -- that
3 does include our weight pool students when
4 we re-added back in over the summer, and
5 would ultimately register and walk in the
6 door. So we know that who tells us that
7 we're going to show up, just last week for
8 the first and who actually walks through
9 the door on a normal or who engages with
10 us in a virtual environment is different.
11 So I don't have the exact number of who
12 actually started into school last week.
13 But what I can tell you is, having a
14 rolling admissions approach and having
15 this targeted at 500, and Ann may be able
16 to talk about the actual number of
17 students that are -- are enrolled, but the
18 idea of having a 500 approach and that
19 rolling admissions through the end of
20 first quarter is to ensure that we have
21 500 students for the freshman class moving
22 forward and we'll be able to add those
23 students in as we go through and we find
24 out there are -- are seats that are open
25 based upon where those students are coming

1 from, which regions, counties, so on and
2 so forth.

3 That's the goal is to try to not have
4 an arbitrary number that's below the --
5 the number that we've always targeted but
6 have never been able to quite achieve just
7 based upon, you know, a variety of
8 circumstances.

9 Dr. Bonitatibus, maybe you can answer
10 and address the current students that are
11 through the registration.

12 DR. BONITATIBUS: Sure. Thank you.
13 Our building capacity for the number of
14 students based on our square footage after
15 the renovation is a little bit over 1900
16 students. Right now, we're sitting at
17 1,809 students. Of those that had been
18 offered the admissions that Mr. Shughart
19 said, 486 may have been offered, we have
20 453 freshmen walk in our doors, virtual
21 doors this fall. The previous year we had
22 467, so that varies from year to year.
23 And my proposal would be that just to
24 boost the numbers at -- at TJ so that way
25 we're closer to that capacity of the 1900,

1 as opposed to 1800, is that we would be
2 able to admit a freshman class of 500
3 students, and we will be able to what we
4 call "froshmores," and -- and open up
5 admissions to many more froshmores because
6 we have that opportunity to do that when
7 students are transitioning from ninth to
8 tenth grade. And so I think an outreach
9 to that particular level would be
10 critical.

11 MS. COHEN: Thank you. And additional
12 question I had for, I guess,
13 Dr. Smith -- Mr. Smith or Mr. Shughart is:
14 Was there consideration given to the idea
15 of pyramid instead of region? I do really
16 have some concerns about the regional
17 approach.

18 MR. SHUGHART: I'll go ahead and
19 attempt to address that. I know there was
20 a lot of conversations around -- and
21 there's been a lot of questions around the
22 -- the approaches of regions versus
23 individual schools or the county level.

24 Honestly, I don't recall if there was
25 conversations specific to a pyramid

1 approach from a high school -- from an
2 individual high school standpoint. We had
3 considered a lot of different options and
4 we'd have to take that back to the team
5 and kind of talk about that and look at
6 that from a pyramid perspective and -- and
7 what that dynamic would change in what
8 we're -- what we proposed this evening --
9 or this afternoon.

10 MS. COHEN: And then really, one of my
11 last questions is, I just really encourage
12 if we're able to extend this timeline of
13 doing the work to figuring out why kids
14 are not applying. I -- I just think we
15 cannot stress enough the need for -- for
16 the whole team to really a deep dive in
17 how we make sure that we are increasing
18 the applicant pool, not just what happens
19 after they apply. And, again, just
20 encourage outreach to students, not just
21 to their schools, so that their individual
22 FCPS e-mails, they're finding out the
23 eligibility requirements and how they get
24 there because that is definitely a barrier
25 that I think just reaching to parents,

1 just reaching to school, we have a lot of
2 kids who are going to have to be their own
3 advocates for why TJ is their passion and
4 their path.

5 And if they're not getting that
6 information directly from FCPS, I think
7 we're missing a really key step of
8 empowering our students to be advocates
9 for themselves and what they want.

10 I do see two additional hands, were
11 these -- I know Ms. Meren did not use her
12 go-back, so Ms. Meren, did you have -- did
13 you want to use your go-back.

14 MS. MEREN: Yeah. I actually
15 just -- yes. Thank you. Yeah, actually I
16 don't know that Ms. Cohen's question was
17 answered about why the region approach
18 versus a pyramid approach, and I know
19 Mr. Shughart you said you -- you know, you
20 couldn't recall. But I think for the
21 go-back -- coming back to us is, I would
22 really like a statement and an analysis
23 of, you know, could we do some kind of
24 model that shows what -- what the outcome
25 could look like if it was by region, or

1 even if why did you not chose by pyramid
2 or what could that look like. So I wanted
3 to mention that. Thank you.

4 MR. SMITH: So we -- we can certainly
5 look at the numbers. I know that there
6 were concerns earlier and questions from
7 board members about underrepresentation in
8 certain -- in certain areas. But when we
9 look at the statistics of what could
10 possibly happen, you would see that our --
11 our number of students getting into the
12 application pool -- I'm sorry -- the
13 lottery pool is really driven by those who
14 apply. Which would then mean it is
15 incumbent upon us to ensure that we are
16 not only getting those students who would
17 regularly and normally apply to TJ, but,
18 also, encourage many more students to
19 apply to TJ.

20 And when you use the lottery, it
21 doesn't necessarily favor any one school
22 over another, but it does ensure that
23 certain underrepresented parts of the
24 county would -- would have greater
25 representation at the school. And so when

1 you look at a county-wide draw versus a --
2 a region-wide draw, you would still get
3 the same distribution of students but you
4 wouldn't necessarily have any way to
5 ensure that we were getting students from
6 a particular parts of the county.

7 So the region approach would -- would
8 help us with that, but we could certainly
9 look at what those numbers would be by
10 pyramid, which essentially in many
11 pyramids it is one middle school per
12 pyramid.

13 MS. MEREN: Okay. I mean, this looks
14 like the options are whole county, region,
15 pyramid, and so why region? That's the
16 ultimate question, I think will be helpful
17 to the board. Is this the right way to
18 slice it.

19 MR. SMITH: We can take a look and
20 bring something back by the eighth or on
21 the eighth.

22 MS. MEREN: Okay. Thank you.

23 MS. COHEN: And then I see colleagues
24 who have a third round. I will ask,
25 please, that you limit those to 45

1 seconds, and we're at seven o'clock, and
2 so I want to be mindful of peoples
3 work-life balance if there is such a
4 thing. So, Ms. McLaughlin, you go ahead
5 first.

6 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: I just want a quick
7 clarity from Jeremy on rolling admissions
8 because at the college level rolling
9 admissions means you open your first
10 application date and then they're just --
11 as you apply, you roll and admit. So what
12 I thought I was hearing is, you admit and
13 then if the kids don't take the offer,
14 then you're almost like having a -- more
15 of a wait-list approach. So, Jeremy, can
16 you walk me through what this timeline
17 looks like when you call it a rolling
18 admissions, because I want to make sure
19 this doesn't confuse our families.

20 MR. SHUGHART: Sure. And Megan --
21 Ms. McLaughlin, I think that's a good kind
22 of point of clarification. What we were
23 referring to as rolling admissions
24 differently from the colleges in what
25 you've described is that it is more like a

1 rolling wait list. What we're -- the
2 intention was is as Dr. Bonitatibus shared
3 was numbers that were not meeting -- the
4 freshman class that walked in the doors or
5 at least virtually walked in the doors
6 this fall was not what we had actually
7 targeted or offered. We know that
8 students are declining their offers for a
9 variety of reasons.

10 But the point being is that if those
11 students are declining offers and we have
12 seats available that we could provide to
13 other students who have a desire to go to
14 TJ, we want to be able to provide as many
15 of those options and opportunities as
16 possible. And so --

17 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: That's fantastic.

18 MR. SHUGHART: -- through this process
19 our goal was to actually, instead of just
20 having a weight pool that we offer a
21 single time over the summer, when we know
22 that there are seats that are available
23 that point in time -- which every summer
24 we offer additional students above and
25 beyond what were offered in the -- I'm

1 sorry -- in the winter round in addition
2 to the summer round, we then offer our
3 weight pool.

4 Well in this process what we're
5 suggesting is, is that we would continue
6 to offer to keep that -- that freshman
7 class that walks in the door at 500. And
8 that's the -- that's kinds of that goal.
9 And I think Dr. Bonitatibus talked about
10 the froshmore, our goal would be to -- you
11 know, to then repeat that process for that
12 following year, so that way we can
13 maintain a level that is greater than what
14 we're currently seeing at TJ due to, you
15 know, student choices, which they're --
16 well -- well -- you know, they're -- you
17 know, we want them to have that choice but
18 we also know that if they're choosing not
19 to, it's in our best interest to go ahead
20 and offer that, if we have the ability, to
21 another student.

22 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Absolutely. I think
23 that's an outstanding improvement and I'm
24 sorry we weren't doing it sooner, but glad
25 it's going to happen going forward.

1 Thanks, Jeremy.

2 MR. SHUGHART: No problem.

3 MS. COHEN: Thanks, Ms. McLaughlin.

4 All right. Abrar, bring us home.

5 MS. OMEISH: That's too much pressure.

6 Okay. One thing, so I wanted to bring
7 back the school-based thing, I know we're
8 talking about pyramids in schools. Maybe
9 a next can be to examine the merits of
10 which of those would be a better option.
11 I say that because when I think about the
12 piece, which we know is one of the key
13 issues. Having it on a school basis
14 might, you know, improve the belief of
15 whether a student can get in. There's --
16 you know, they have people from their
17 school who have gotten in, it can
18 influence recruitment because we know
19 we're working directly rather than this
20 abstract number that a little bit above.
21 So from a recruitment perspective and
22 outreach perspective, I think it could be
23 helpful, but maybe that next step is to
24 just examine the merits.

25 Finally, I do plan to support this of

1 course. Perfect can't be the enemy of the
2 good here. I really appreciate Mr. Frisch
3 and Ms. Cohen's comments earlier in that
4 direction. And finally, I don't want us
5 to forget the voices that we're not
6 hearing from which are all those kids who
7 didn't get in but are exceptional and
8 talented. We want to make sure every kid
9 in our system is successful.

10 MS. COHEN: Well done. See you were
11 up to the challenge, Ms. Omeish. I just
12 want to thank everyone so much today. I
13 know this has been an absolute marathon
14 and we tackled some really tough
15 long-standing systemic issues and I know
16 there's been a real commitment on this
17 board and not just this year, I
18 understand. But, also, to the staff of
19 how do we make headway here. And I
20 appreciate everybody bringing their best
21 thinking and trying to figure out how we
22 get to a place where, as Ms. Omeish said,
23 we are seeing the talent and value and
24 opportunity in every kid in this system.
25 And so thank you so much to everybody,

1 thank you staff, thank you colleagues, and
2 I think we can put this one to bed,
3 Dr. Brabrand, unless you feel like you'd
4 like a sense of the board, formally, I
5 think that you seem to get it through my
6 colleagues' comments.

7 DR. BRABRAND: I think we're good. We
8 are good, we heard your feedback, we'll
9 take the next steps and we'll be glad to
10 update you at our next meeting in October.

11 MS. COHEN: All right. And
12 colleagues, I know we have some next steps
13 that we need to tackle. Did everybody
14 have an opportunity to take a look at the
15 Google Doc?

16 MS. DERENAK KAUFAX: No, I'm sorry. I
17 was asking what the next steps were. I'm
18 sorry.

19 MS. KEYS-GAMARRA: I didn't know it
20 was available.

21 MS. COHEN: It's really okay. I'm
22 sorry. I e-mailed everybody and texted to
23 let everyone know that they were -- they
24 had been sent and Ms. Mahita and
25 Ms. -- were trying to -- trying to help

1 us.

2 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Yeah. If they can
3 post it because the public need to be able
4 to see it, too.

5 MS. DERENAK KAUFAX: Typically, they
6 post the document.

7 MS. COHEN: Anne, is that possible?
8 Do you --

9 MS. BENEDICTO: I'm sorry. That is
10 not possible tonight. I -- I apologize
11 for that.

12 MS. COHEN: All right. I can look and
13 see. Would you guys like me to read them
14 again, is that helpful?

15 MS. PEKARSKY: Yes.

16 MS. COHEN: And then we can just as a
17 group -- we can just agree that either
18 there's something we feel like we need to
19 quickly pull out or we can just agree with
20 the -- the consensus of the -- of the
21 document; is that acceptable?

22 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Ms. Cohen, a point of
23 privilege to ask a question.

24 MS. COHEN: Yes, ma'am.

25 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Yeah. I would -- I

1 would say, how many -- how many next steps
2 are listed there before you.

3 MS. COHEN: Fourteen.

4 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Yeah. I would
5 suggest -- we've done what we've done in
6 the past. That document be sent to the
7 board and our homework is tonight to see
8 if our next is on there, and then forward
9 it to the superintendent who is giving a
10 thumbs up right now, for the chair and
11 vice chair to work with him on that.

12 MS. COHEN: All right. I do think we
13 actually have to read them; it sounds
14 like. I know there's an ADA piece and so
15 I -- I promise I will try to be a
16 micro-machine, but --

17 DR. ANDERSON: Ms. Cohen, point of
18 order.

19 MS. COHEN: Yes, ma'am.

20 DR. ANDERSON: I just e-mailed the
21 next steps to everyone. So at least
22 everybody can have it in front of them
23 while you read through it really quickly.

24 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Ms. Cohen, can I
25 just share my screen with it, rather than

1 reading it? I'm happy to do that.

2 MS. COHEN: Sure, that would be
3 wonderful.

4 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: So, I guess --

5 MR. FRISCH: None of these are points
6 of order.

7 MS. BENEDICTO: Who needs to -- who
8 needs to have it as -- to put their
9 screen --

10 MS. COHEN: That was Ms. Sizemore
11 Heizer, who was kind enough to say she
12 would share her screen.

13 MS. BENEDICTO: Okay.

14 MS. COHEN: Ms. Derenak Kaufax, did
15 you have to something to add?

16 MS. DERENAK KAUFAX: Yes. I had asked
17 for the superintendent to come back with
18 us -- come to us for looking at an
19 additional magnet school and looking
20 at -- that's one. And then looking at a
21 commitment to deal with the three issues
22 that have been plaguing us for years. The
23 front loading of curriculum in math and
24 science, fidelity of implementation in the
25 young scholars program, and making certain

1 that advanced academic resource teachers
2 are in all elementary schools --

3 MS. COHEN: I will -- I'm trying to
4 type on my phone, as we do this, so you
5 guys will have to be patient with me,
6 but -- type it in at the same time.

7 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Yes. I can type
8 it in. So I wasn't ready to do that, so
9 if -- Tammy, if you wouldn't mind, I'm
10 happy to type that in, so, "I want to
11 explore magnet -- explore AART" --

12 MS. DERENAK KAUFAX: Explore
13 additional magnet high schools -- AAP
14 magnet high schools and then commit to a
15 strategic plan. This is a second one,
16 that's one issue. And then of the is next
17 one is commit to strategic plan to address
18 long-standing issues affecting diversity
19 and equity I AAP programing and these
20 include front-loading of curriculum, math
21 and science curriculum, implementing the
22 young scholars program with fidelity and
23 uniformity across our schools, and
24 ensuring that there are advanced academic
25 resource teachers in all of our schools.

1 MS. COHEN: And I'm just going to ask,
2 Dr. Brabrand, if I -- if you deem it
3 appropriate, please feel free to send your
4 staff home to eat supper and if you don't
5 mind hanging through with us,
6 we'll -- we'll knock this out quickly.

7 DR. BRABRAND: Well, thank you.

8 MS. COHEN: All --

9 MS. DERENAK KAUFAX: Thank you.

10 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Please let me
11 know if there's anything different. Just
12 take a look if you can see it.

13 MS. COHEN: All right. Ms. Tholen,
14 your hand is up next.

15 MS. THOLEN: Yes, I wanted to follow
16 up on whether or not a problem-solving
17 question would be part of the student
18 information sheet. They already said they
19 would look into that. And I wanted to
20 follow up on a prior question about
21 utilizing a weighted GPA. And then
22 Dr. Brabrand mentioned he would have to
23 us -- in the next day or two, I guess, his
24 plan for talking with the community about
25 the changes --

1 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: -- in the
2 community outreach plan; is that right?

3 DR. BRABRAND: Yes.

4 MS. THOLEN: The communication of the
5 outreach plan.

6 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Elaine, I have
7 your three.

8 MS. THOLEN: Thank you.

9 MS. COHEN: We have Ms. Corbett
10 Sanders.

11 MS. CORBETT SANDERS: Yes. Thank you.
12 Ms. Tholen picked up on some of my
13 original ask, which was the outreach plan,
14 and by October 8th, a clearer definition
15 of what that application process would be
16 to include the expanded -- the revised
17 student sheet, a problem -- a
18 demonstration of problem-solving
19 capability, and the address the question
20 as to courses that are -- looking at a
21 more holistic look at the application to
22 include courses taken by students in the
23 math and sciences so that the focus is a
24 math and science area.

25 And as I -- as I understand it,

1 Mr. Smith committed that he could -- he
2 would be able to provide us that
3 additional detail. And then the
4 statement -- I think it's Number 2 or 3,
5 associated with mine, which was the
6 submission of the plan to Richmond should
7 take place after our discussion on October
8 8th. So it should not -- what I wanted to
9 assure because we have a deadline of
10 October 8th now, and what the
11 superintendent said is that he actually
12 had until October 9th, so we wanted to
13 make sure that that is clear -- clearly
14 stated to allow for the public engagement
15 and the answers to our questions.

16 And then beyond the -- just the TJ
17 admissions, the superintendent was going
18 to come to us with clarity on how we're
19 going to ensure that the availability of
20 advanced math and sciences in elementary
21 schools is not limited to just the AAP
22 centers, but that we have a fidelity of
23 implementation of those programs in all of
24 our elementary schools, so that we have
25 opportunity and access.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

2 Ms. Keys-Gamarra -- Ms. Corbett Sanders, I
3 just want to say, I think mine captures
4 that as well, but it's okay that
5 it's -- it's the front-loading and
6 fidelity portion. I was just --

7 MS. CORBETT SANDERS: Yours is with
8 the AAP centers, and I just wanted to make
9 sure it's beyond the AAP centers.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah. Well,
11 maybe it's written that way, that wasn't
12 my intent. I'll look at it again. I'll
13 talk to -- I'll talk to --

14 MS. COHEN: All right. Super fast, as
15 fast as possible, Ms. Keys-Gamarra and
16 then Ms. McLaughlin.

17 MS. KEYS-GAMARRA: Okay. I asked for
18 additional work sessions and a board
19 committee to look at how we're going to
20 ongoing concerns regarding TJ, including a
21 look at historical documents such as the
22 MSAOC reports, task force documents, and
23 the Blue Ribbon study. Are we ready for
24 the next one?

25 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Yes. I've got

1 work session and board committee to
2 address ongoing TJ concerns including
3 looking at historical documents.

4 MS. KEYS-GAMARRA: Okay. Outline
5 possible support for admittees this
6 summer.

7 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Outline possible
8 support for admittees this summer.

9 MS. KEYS-GAMARRA: Right. And then
10 the last one is to look at the pros and
11 cons of governor schools versus academies
12 to address equity and access to advanced
13 learning opportunities, including the
14 ability to serve the area in which the
15 school resides. I'll be happy to read
16 that again if you need me to.

17 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: I've got, "look
18 at pros and cons of governor schools
19 versus academies to look" and sorry Karen,
20 I lost the rest of it, if you can repeat
21 it.

22 MS. KEYS-GAMARRA: Okay. To look
23 at -- to address equity and access to
24 advanced learning opportunities including
25 the ability to serve the area in which the

1 school resides.

2 MS. COHEN: All right. Let's -- or --

3 MS. KEYS-GAMARRA: Thank you.

4 MS. COHEN: I'm sorry.

5 MS. KEYS-GAMARRA: Thank you.

6 MS. COHEN: Sorry. There's a lot of
7 mics on, so I don't know who's talking at
8 the same time. Ms. Tholen has her hand
9 up.

10 MS. THOLEN: Yes, I just wanted to add
11 one more thing. Can we please --

12 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Elaine, you're
13 really staticky, I'm sorry. I'm having
14 trouble hearing you.

15 MS. THOLEN: Sorry. Can you hear me
16 better? I'd like to look at capacity
17 issues and programming issues at our base
18 high schools that will impacted.

19 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Okay.
20 Programming and capacity issues at base
21 high schools that might be impacted by
22 admissions process change.

23 MS. THOLEN: Thank you.

24 MS. COHEN: Thank you. And then I
25 just see Ms. Corbett Sanders with her hand

1 up, that is hopefully our last -- next
2 steps -- or --

3 MS. CORBETT SANDERS: Yes.

4 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Wait. Ms. Cohen,
5 I've had my hand up the whole time.

6 MS. COHEN: I'm so sorry, you
7 actually -- you totally disappeared from
8 my screen, I apologize. There we go.

9 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Megan, I see
10 yours written in the e-mail. I can just
11 type it in if you're okay with that. I
12 see it written here. I can cut and paste
13 it, if you'd like.

14 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: That's fine. But
15 like everybody else, I think it's
16 important that they be read out loud for
17 the public who's going to watch this now
18 or later. So if Laura Jane wants to read
19 them out loud or I can read them out loud,
20 then Rachna you're able to type them in
21 because I did send them to you.

22 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Yeah. I'm just
23 going to cut and paste them in. If you
24 want to read them Megan, I can cut and
25 paste them.

1 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Sure.

2 MS. COHEN: Yeah. Ms. Mclaughlin, I'm
3 happy for you to read them.

4 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: All right. I'll read
5 them real quick. I would like staff to
6 provide a summary crosswalk and analysis
7 of the school's admissions processes that
8 were cited in the appendix by the October
9 8th work session. I would like them to
10 provide the numbers and the -- the
11 percentages of the applicants who are
12 earning a 3.5 unweighted GPA versus a
13 weighted GPA for this prior 2019
14 admissions class. And I'd like them to
15 provide the application numbers for each
16 of the middle schools as were represented
17 in the 2019 admissions class.

18 If Dr. Brabrand or staff have any
19 questions for clarity, I'm happy to
20 explain that.

21 MS. COHEN: Well, and I just want to
22 interject that we did get the -- we did
23 get it e-mail, I think, that provided each
24 schools applicants and then admitted
25 students for the last five years.

1 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Yes. But Ms. Cohen,
2 as I've asked for eight years with staff,
3 having things in separate places versus
4 having things in the documents so that the
5 public can find it all in the same place
6 and board members when we reference back
7 to it, we can. So I would like it all in
8 one place.

9 MS. COHEN: Yeah. We'll have to go
10 back again, it provides a FERPA issue of
11 numbers that are too small, so I --

12 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: I have -- I have no
13 problem -- I have no problem where they
14 can't provide it, they just provide what
15 they can. I mean, the -- we're trying to
16 see what we're looking at here for --

17 MS. COHEN: So you're looking at
18 document to be added back into the
19 materials for today's meeting?

20 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: That -- yes, for
21 Question 3.

22 MS. COHEN: Okay. Got you.

23 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: And then -- oh, I'm
24 sorry, Ms. Cohen, the question I had asked
25 in my first round, but it wasn't provided

1 and I do want to make sure it's here. So
2 Ms. Sizemore Heizer, if you can type it
3 in. I noted that we only had percentage
4 of -- we had the racial demographics of
5 the entering class, but we don't have the
6 applicant demographics and so we should
7 have the comparable applicant demographics
8 so we understand, you know, what was the
9 pool that applied, what was the pool that
10 got accepted, and then what was the pool
11 that enrolled. Those three sets of
12 numbers are typically available. So I'd
13 like to see that.

14 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Are you talking
15 about the African class for this upcoming
16 freshman class.

17 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: I think just for the
18 Class of 20 -- I think they gave -- didn't
19 they give us 2019. But the -- the
20 recently enrolled freshmen for the class
21 of -- sorry. The 2019 admissions class.

22 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Okay. Thank
23 you. So the 2019 admissions class,
24 followed by pool accepted and pool
25 enrolled applicant demographics.

1 MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Yep. Thank you.

2 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: You're welcome.

3 MS. COHEN: All right. Does that do
4 it for everybody. I still see a lot of
5 raised hands, but I'm praying we're done
6 with next steps.

7 MS. CORBETT SANDERS: Ms. Cohen.

8 MS. COHEN: Yes, Ms. Corbett Sanders.

9 MS. CORBETT SANDERS: I have one that
10 I had mentioned earlier but it didn't get
11 on here, which is that we have to build
12 into this a process for review and
13 analysis of the impact of these changes.
14 Of any changes made so that if we have to
15 adjust, we can.

16 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Regular review
17 and analysis, like yearly? What are we
18 looking at or is that something to work
19 on?

20 MS. CORBETT SANDERS: We could either
21 say regular or periodic review and
22 analysis, but I do think review, analysis,
23 and adjustment. We should be doing this
24 on any policy -- any work that we do,
25 anyway.

1 MS. COHEN: And I'm hopeful that
2 anything we flag for staff, I'm hoping
3 that we will get this information by the
4 8th. My assumption is that you all have
5 it and don't need it added, like finding
6 out the information from the applicants,
7 who -- who -- or finding out a better
8 sense of why kids are not applying. I
9 recognize that's part of the ongoing work,
10 so I'm not going to add it as a next step.
11 But I think it's there since we've already
12 got 30 of them.

13 All right. Then I feel like if
14 everybody could take a really quick look,
15 I want to make sure that nobody has any
16 issues with one that have been added.
17 Sorry. Yes, Ms. Corbett Sanders.

18 MS. CORBETT SANDERS: No, I didn't say
19 anything.

20 MS. COHEN: Oh. I apologize.

21 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Laura Jane, that
22 was me, I'll just say I'll scroll to the
23 top and I'll give you a couple of minutes
24 to look and let me know whenever I can
25 scroll down to the rest.

1 MS. COHEN: All right.

2 DR. BRABRAND: Ms. Cohen, if I could
3 say, this Dr. Brabrand. Obviously, we're
4 going to our very best, and like you,
5 we've been at it since 10 a.m. and most of
6 us, frankly, much earlier today, 7 a.m., 8
7 a.m. meetings. We're going to do our best
8 to address all of these items. We have a
9 very short time frame, we will do our
10 very, very best. But like you all, too,
11 we have been doing 24/7 days, weekends,
12 holidays, and we're going to do our very
13 best to get you as much of this
14 information as we can. There's two people
15 in Jeremy's office, but we will do our
16 very best.

17 MS. COHEN: All right. Crew, just
18 want to check in one more time. If
19 everybody just doing a quick read, Rachna,
20 I think you probably scroll to the next
21 sets. And the goal here is if something
22 does not feel like the sense of the board,
23 we can call it out, of if anything's an
24 overlap then we could joyfully combine
25 them, that would be great. If not, I

1 think it would be great if we can send
2 everybody home.

3 All right. I don't see any hands
4 other than Ms. Sizemore Heizer's.

5 MS. SIZEMORE HEIZER: Oh, sorry. I
6 can't undo my hand right now while I'm
7 showing my screen, so just ignore me.

8 MS. COHEN: We'll forgive you, we're
9 so grateful that you took this on to type
10 this in here. Thank you very, very much
11 for doing that, I know Karl -- as well.
12 So I appreciate both of you very much
13 trying to do this, and appreciate
14 everybody's patience with working in this
15 format.

16 So thank you very much. I really
17 appreciate everybody's time and good work
18 today. And I hope that someone has been
19 kind enough to cook supper for you, and
20 I'm very thankful to my colleague,
21 Mr. Frisch for the earlier half of today.
22 I'm looking forward to seeing many of you
23 again later this week.

24 MR. FRISCH: Thank you, Laura Jane.

25 MS. COHEN: Thanks everybody.

1 (Whereupon, the meeting was concluded.)

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1 C E R T I F I C A T I O N

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4 I, SARAH COLEMAN, a Court Reporter and
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8 and that this transcript is accurate and complete, to
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10 I further certify that I am in no way
11 related to any of the parties to this action nor am I
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